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CAN THE WORLD BE WON FOR CHRIST?

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CAN THE WORLD BE WON FOR CHRIST?

BY

NORMAN MACLEAN

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TO

THE CONGREGATION

WORSHIPPING IN THE

PARISH CHURCH

OF

COLINTON

WHOSE ZEAL IN BEHALF OF

MISSIONS

HAS BEEN AN EXAMPLE TO MANY

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PREFACE

THIS book had its origin in a series of articles which the writer contributed to the *Scotsman* on the Reports of the Commissions of the World Missionary Conference. These articles, revised and enlarged, are now embodied in Chapters I., III., IV., V., VI., and VII.; the other six chapters are wholly new.

The matters discussed in this book will be found set forth with all fulness of detail in the eight volumes of the Reports of the Commissions. These Reports are the most valuable documents available for the scientific study of the missionary enterprise. Only the general underlying principles are here discussed, and for the opinions which he formed from the study of the materials, and for the form in which these opinions are expressed, the writer is alone responsible.

The desire of the writer is that through this book there may come to others something of that inspiration which came to those who attended the World Missionary Conference—a gathering which the Archbishop of Canterbury rightly designated as "an assembly without parallel in the history of this or any other land."

CONTENTS

I

PAGE

THE STUPENDOUS TASK 1

Insufficiency of present effort—Changed attitude of Missions—Greatness of the field—Africa—Power of Islam—Malay Archipelago—India—Unoccupied fields—Over 120,000,000 outside the reach of Christianity—Church must fall back on God.

II

CAN CHRISTIANITY JUSTIFY ITS CLAIM? . . 19

Claim of Christianity to be the final religion—Three great arguments for its claim: It embraces (1) Perfect ideal of man; (2) Perfect ideal of God; (3) Makes these ideals operative in the lives of men—They who see the Vision must follow it to the farthest ends of the earth.

III

THE COMMON GROUND 33

Common ground of worship—Christianity's impact with non-Christian races on this common ground—Animistic religions—Ancestor worship—Hinduism—Need for sympathetic insight and vision—World must accept the highest.

IV

PAGE

THE PROBLEMS OF THE INFANT CHURCH . . 49

What the coming of Christianity means—The problems that ensue—Problem of polygamy—Of caste—Of ancestor worship—The necessity for Christianity being again Orientalised—The necessity for the native Church getting a free hand—Mass movements—Judge not.

V

THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION 69

The illiterate mass—Mistaken policy in India—Lord Macaulay—Importance of the vernacular—How Christianity became indigenous at the first—Only through the vernacular can it become indigenous now—Importance of Christian colleges as means of reaching the Hindus—The two alternatives.

VI

THE TRAINING OF MISSIONARIES . . . 89

Necessity for thorough preparation—Essential that language be mastered—Lord Cromer—A ready-made religion and a ready-made civilisation useless—Necessity for general knowledge, and insight into what is essential to religion—Missionaries unable to argue with Mohammedans—Character the great power.

VII

THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH AND STATE . . 103

Christianity in relation to non-Christian Governments—A varying problem—Changed attitude of

PAGE

Christianity — Will not accept blood-money — Policy of the "Mailed Fist"—Co-operation with Governments in sphere of education—Unsatisfactory attitude of British Government towards Christianity in Africa.

VIII

THE PARAMOUNT FACTOR 119

The native Church—How Christianity spread at the first—World must be evangelised by the native Church—Already begun in Manchuria and Korea—The causes which make the native Church the instrument—Indigenous—Knows the language —A living demonstration—The enthusiasm of first love—Principal Rainy and the native Christians.

IX

THE IMPELLING MOTIVE—"FOR MY SAKE" . . 133

Necessity for a strong base for Christian army— The question of diffusion or concentration — Diffusion the historic policy—Motives impelling Church forward—Needs of man—And the glory of Jesus Christ—Motive of personal obligation to Jesus Christ.

X

"THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE"—THE CALL TO UNION 147

The primal condition laid down by Christ—The citadel within which unity is realised—The belief in the Incarnation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—Difficulties in way of corporate union—

PAGE

Influence of Missions on the unity of the Church — Necessity for an International Board of Missions — Christianity being saved on the mission-field.

XI

THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY 167

The open doors—The opened ways—The opened hearts of the nations—The working of God—The plastic condition of non-Christian nations—Lost opportunities in Africa—Will the opportunity be lost now?—Will the West deprive the East of its ancient faiths without giving a higher?—Christianity's great opportunity to develop itself in the West—"Now let me burn out for God."

XII

IT SHALL BE WON—*NIL DESPERANDUM CHRISTO DUCE* . 181

Mood of pessimism — Mood of optimism—The three great forces: Unity, Prayer, Consecration —The day of triumph breaking over all lands.

THE STUPENDOUS TASK

Insufficiency of present effort—Changed attitude of Missions — Greatness of the field — Africa — Power of Islam—Malay Archipelago — India — Unoccupied fields— Over 120,000,000 outside the reach of Christianity— Church must fall back on God.

I

THE STUPENDOUS TASK

"CHRISTIANITY IS THE RELIGION, EVEN IN NAME, OF ONLY ONE-THIRD OF THE HUMAN RACE"

THE question which the World Missionary Conference has left ringing in the ears of Christendom is this: "Can the world be won for Christ?" For the first time the whole field of Christian Missions has been explored; the disunited efforts put forth by the Churches have been surveyed; the vast areas as yet untouched and unoccupied in the name of Christ have been tabulated; and the Christian world has been brought face to face, for the first time, with the full difficulty of the work which remains to be accomplished ere the Church will have fulfilled the last command of her Lord, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." It has had also presented to it the feebleness of the

efforts now made to cope with this great work. For the first time the enterprise of Christian Missions has been scientifically examined and appraised. It now remains for the Churches to learn the lessons which the greatest of Missionary Conferences tried to teach—and, having learned, to act on them.

The day is not far distant when Christians took it as a matter of course that Christianity would conquer the world. It did not really matter much what effort was put forth—for was it not written in the Book that it would conquer? And it would be so! To those who cherish this delusion it must be a shock to realise that the present amount of missionary activity is wholly insufficient to conquer heathenism. At one time the West thought that the East would inevitably bow down before it and receive its civilisation and its religion. But no longer has the East any thought of bowing down before the West—it is awakened to a sense of its own latent power, and is preparing itself to contest the sovereignty of the world with the West. And the other fact that is apparent is the wonderfully altered attitude of the Christian

world to the non-Christian world. Formerly the Christian missionary went to the heathen, and said, "Your religion is a lie, and if you hold to it you are damned." But now other thoughts and worthier conceptions of God have come to the Christian world, and the missionary no longer says, "Your religion is a lie;" what he says is, "Your religion has the root of the matter in it; you, too, feel the hunger for the Eternal even as we do; you have the half-truth—we bring you the whole truth." In this changed attitude lies a complete revolution in missionary methods. Ere the missionary in these days sets himself to build the city of God, he must first of all ascertain how far the city is built to his hands.

The first step towards the successful accomplishment of any work is to realise its difficulty, and so adjust the means to the task. And the report of the Commission on the Non-Christian World will make the Churches realise as never before the overwhelming magnitude of the work yet to be accomplished ere the world is won for Christianity. If we take the continent of

Africa as an example, we shall realise what heroic effort the Christian Churches must put forth if Africa is not to be lost to the Christian ideal. The total population of that continent is reckoned at 180 millions, only half the population of China, but this population is scattered over a territory three times the size of Europe. One missionary reports of the sphere of his labours: "The field is as large as Germany; its population only amounts to a hundred thousand," and in this continent there is a bewildering variety of tribes and languages. The mission-field of one society includes thirty different languages! In the whole of Africa there are reckoned to be no less than 523 different languages and 320 different dialects, and beyond three small sections of the continent there is not a single tribe with a literature or even an alphabet of its own. And all that mass of humanity is sunk in the degradation of Polytheism, harassed by tribal wars, the prey to grossest superstition. The task of Christianity under these conditions is not the preaching of the gospel merely—it is the bringing of education, of letters, of agriculture, of all the elementary

facts of civilisation. The stupendous work to which the Church is called is not so much the teaching of a creed as laying the foundations of civilisation.

But not only is Christianity confronted with the vast mass of degraded humanity opposing all progress by the dead weight of its impassivity, but it is also met by a persistent, unresting, and powerful opponent—Islam. The rapid advance of Islam is the great danger facing Christianity in Africa. Any one who cares to consider the matter will realise what a loss it would be to the world were Mohammedanism to conquer Africa. It is a religion without any knowledge of the Divine Fatherhood or human brotherhood, without compassion or purity—and to womanhood it means despair. We have only to consider the state of those countries in which Islam has been dominant for centuries to realise how great a calamity it would be were Africa to become its prey. And at present there is no doubt Islam is conquering Africa. It has on its side the power of prestige! To our Western complacency it seems incredible that our religion should be despised

as an inferior thing. Yet to the Mohammedan Christianity is a thing to be despised. Islam has already conquered Christianity in Asia—that degenerate Christianity which spent its strength fighting about dogmas and words Mohammedanism swept before it as chaff. The Crescent replaced the Cross in Asia. The Church Mosque of St. John the Baptist dominates that most ancient of cities, Damascus, and the Cross crowned and dominated the great Church once. And on the architrave of a beautiful gate in one of the transepts a triumphant verse was carved by the Christian builders:—

"Thy kingdom, O Christ, is a kingdom of all ages;
And Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

To-day the Crescent has replaced the Cross on that great fane; and the worshippers within pray to Allah. The inscription alone remains—a pathetic and ironic relic. And that Church, now a mosque, visualises for us the fate which has overtaken Christianity in the near East. To Islam it seems as if Christianity were only an imperfect faith,

which served its day and was replaced by the perfect revelation of Mohammed. In Arabia the traveller can see a great cavalry barracks which was once a Christian cathedral, and seeing, he no longer wonders that to the Moslem Christianity should appear a religion susperseded and outworn. And this great religion, issuing from its northern strongholds, is now sweeping over Africa. In the great Mohammedan University at Cairo there are ten thousand students. Thence the propaganda of Islam spreads, and if that propaganda is to be arrested it must be attacked at its source. And the difficulty of that is apparent when we think how to the Mohammedan, with his haughty contempt of Christianity, which is to him but an antiquated religion set aside by Allah, conversion to Christianity is as inconceivable as a return to Judaism is to a Christian. To-day there are in Africa nearly sixty millions of Mohammedans—a third of the whole population. And when once the African embraces Islam there is little hope of his ever becoming a Christian. To-day Africa has become the battle-ground in which Christianity and Moham-

medanism contend for the destinies of a continent.

How comes it then that Islam is sweeping through Africa like a prairie fire? It is partly because Islam presents a lower ideal, adopts no uncompromising attitude towards matters which Christianity will never permit, countenances polygamy, and without demanding sacrifice confers a higher social status. Its creed is, moreover, of the simplest: "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet," is its only doctrinal test. The most ignorant can grasp it. It is far otherwise with the "Three Persons but One God," which is the basis of all the Christian creeds. But the chief cause is that every Mohammedan trader is a zealous propagandist. The traditional attitude of the Christian trader is one of indifference, if not hostility, to the missionary enterprise of his faith. The Christian State looked with distrust on Christian missions. Missionaries had to make their way to India in foreign ships. English ships refused them a passage. To this day Britain in the Soudan forbids an active Christian propaganda! But how different all this is

with Islam. Every follower of Mohammed is a missionary aflame with zeal for his faith. The result is that all over the continent the situation is critical. In almost every district it is reported that "the country is now more largely Mohammedan than pagan, and the Mohammedans are steadily pushing into pagan districts." Long ago the churches of Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine succumbed before the virile might of Islam. The question now is, whether the whole of Africa is to share their fate. "Islam is the only one of the great religions to come after Christianity; the only one that definitely claims to correct, complete, and supersede Christianity; the only one that categorically denies the truth of Christianity; the only one that has in the past signally defeated Christianity; the only one that seriously disputes the world with Christianity; the only one which in several parts of the world is to-day forestalling and gaining on Christianity." The menace of Islam is indeed great.

And it is now even as it was at the beginning. Then Christianity spent its strength in wrangling regarding metaphysical theology

and the Church was rent by a burning hatred of sect for sect. When Islam emerged from the desert the one sect exulted that the other sect was smitten. In the seventh century the Church failed because it was disunited. To-day a disunited Christianity is impotent to face the peril to Christianity in Africa. While Mohammedanism is spreading like a fire, Christianity creeps like a snail. Its agents, miserably few in number in proportion to the work, are not even properly distributed. There is even overlapping. "In the Shiré Highlands . . . the Church of Scotland mission, properly developed, might have sufficed, . . . but seven other missions have come in. . . ." Over against the sporadic, disunited efforts of Christianity there is the united, persistent, conquering campaign of Islam.

It is not in Africa merely that Christianity finds itself confronted by the zealous and powerful propaganda of Islam. In India there are over sixty-four millions of Mohammedans, and in the ten years preceding the last census there was an increase in their numbers of about six millions. In China there are over twenty millions of Moslems. In New Guinea

and the Malay Archipelego Islam has now almost undisputed possession, numbering as its adherents about thirty-five millions, and it carries on its propaganda with its ancient thoroughness and fanaticism. And, more startling still, in one province of the Russian Empire, since religious toleration was proclaimed, one hundred thousand Christians have become Moslem. We took it for granted that by the mere form of a superior civilisation Christianity would win; but while we rested on a supposition, Islam, with an unresting ardour, was conquering the heathen world for Mohammed. The Cross stood still, while the Crescent swept from the Levant through India to the islands of the Pacific and penetrated into the deep recesses of Africa. Because Christianity slumbered then it will need a mighty effort now to replace the Crescent by the Cross.

But the difficulty of the stupendous task of winning the world for Jesus Christ is far from being realised yet. We have to look beyond Islam and see the forces of the non-Christian religions arrayed in the antagonism of their strength. In India we are faced by a gross

population of three hundred millions, speaking 147 languages, entrenched behind Hindu Pantheism, whose roots lie deep in gross superstitions, and whose upper branches wave in the thin air of Theosophy. The three hundred millions of China, welded into one by the rites of ancestor worship, without so much as words in their language to express "sin" and "holiness," bar the path of Christianity with their hatred of everything to which the word "foreign" can be applied. The sixty millions of Japan, knowing no higher worship than the worship of the Emperor, see in Christianity little but an enemy to their loyalty to the earthly ruler. To these the message of Christianity has already come in some small measure. But beyond these again lies the huge mass of the world's population, which is yet wholly outside the reach of all the evangelising agencies of Christianity. In Africa alone there are yet seventy millions wholly beyond the reach of the furthest outstretched arm of Christianity. After a century of missionary activity there are still in the world one hundred and twenty millions outside the influence of any Christian agency—to whose

ears the evangel of Jesus Christ cannot so much as come. They are distributed thus:—

Asia, including Mongolia, Turkestan, Afghanistan, Tibet, Bhutan, and Nepel	42,000,000
Africa	70,000,000
Arabia	3,000,000
Syria	550,000
Sinaitic Peninsula	50,000
Eastern Sumatra and adjacent islands	3,250,000
Medusa, Bali, and Lombok Islands ...	2,000,000
Malay Peninsula	1,000,000
	121,850,000

If in that aggregate of the races still unreached by Christianity are included the populations in areas nominally reached, but really untouched by the gospel because of the feebleness of the Christian effort, the total population of the world still wholly outside the possible influence of Christianity cannot be far short of two hundred and fifty millions. (These figures are necessarily only approximate.)

Such, then, is the stupendous task which lies before Christianity. All that vast mass of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and degradation has to be permeated by the influence

of Jesus Christ ere the world can be won for Christianity. More than a hundred years have passed since Carey set forth to India, and the work of winning the world began anew. Only the fringe of the great territory has been touched; only a handful out of the great hosts has been gathered into the Christian fold. We have so far only been playing at the work. We have relied on a campaign of flying columns for the conquest of the world. The call which now rings in the ears of the Churches is a call summoning to a concerted world-wide campaign. The day of playing at this work is past. The day of self-sacrifice is come. What Christianity is summoned to prove is this: to establish its claim to wield the destinies of the world. Is it a living and a conquering energy—or a decadent and a spent force? In Abyssinia a degenerate Christian Church is yielding day by day converts to Islam. Is that to be the fate of Christianity as a whole? As one surveys the ancient races entrenched in their hoary faiths, and the vast territories still unoccupied and untouched by Christianity; as one sees the forces of ignorance and superstition and lust massed, presenting a solid front

against the progress of the gospel; and as one looks at the Christian Churches and sees how few they are who feel the call to go forth and conquer the world, and how few are willing to make any sacrifice for the glory of their Lord—then there comes the hesitating doubt: can this task ever be accomplished? And the question rings in the ear, uncertain of its answer, "Can the world be won for Christ?" But the question throws us back on God. With Him the answer lies. Can the Church find now, as the Church ever found of old in the day of trial, such new treasures of power and energy, and vitalising force, such new revelations of the riches and the glory of God, that it will arise and go forth and conquer, not in its own strength, but in the irresistible might of God? Therein lies the hope of conquering the world for Jesus Christ. The summons that rings through Christendom is a summons calling the Christian host, if it would conquer, to fall back on God. To the world the task may seem impossible, and its performance a vain dream, but what are Christians in the world for but to achieve the impossible by the help of God!

CAN CHRISTIANITY JUSTIFY ITS CLAIM?

Claim of Christianity to be the final religion—Three great arguments for its claim : It embraces (1) Perfect ideal of man ; (2) Perfect ideal of God ; (3) Makes these ideals operative in the lives of men—They who see the Vision must follow it to the farthest ends of the earth.

II

CAN CHRISTIANITY JUSTIFY ITS CLAIM?

THE claim of Christianity is this: that it is the final religion. It arrogates to itself the unique and pre-eminent place as the religion destined to sway the spiritual forces of the whole world. In this Christianity is not alone, for Islam also has dreamed of a world-empire, and dreams of it still. It is that dream that hovers before the eyes of the devotees of Mohammed as they sweep through Africa with the cry ere dawn, "Come to prayer, come to salvation, for prayer is better than sleep." Judaism dreamed the same dream. There has been no great religion but has felt the stirring of it. The question is: Can Christianity justify its claim to be the final universal religion? Can it be that its dream is baseless as these others? The power behind the missionary enterprise depends on the answer. If we are

convinced that Christianity's claim to be the world-religion springs from its inherent truth, that it enshrines the highest ideal of God and man, and that it alone worthily satisfies the soul's hunger, then there comes the passionate desire to make that religion which is the highest and the noblest operative throughout the whole world. It is only when our souls are convinced that Jesus Christ is God's last and greatest Word for men, when we see Him towering above all powers and systems and teachers, alone, unapproachable — only then are we able to follow Him to the uttermost ends of the earth. And if we follow Him at all, we must be prepared to follow Him there.

There are three great reasons on the ground of which we can claim that Christianity is the absolute and final religion.

1. It enshrines the perfect ideal of man.
2. It enshrines the perfect ideal of God.
3. It makes these perfect ideals operative in the lives of men and in the development of nations.

1. The highest ideal of man.

Men in every age have fashioned for them-

selves the ideal man. He has gleamed before the eyes of men as perfect in physical form—the ideal of beauty; as perfect in mind and in will—the ideal of power; as perfect in spiritual perception, spurning the seen and the temporal, merged in the unseen and eternal; but when we come face to face with Jesus Christ, all the veils of words and all the mists of dogma swept aside, and we see Him walking in Galilee, setting His face towards the Cross, there rises in our souls the abiding conviction that He is the perfect ideal, God's highest thought for men.

All others are sin-soiled and imperfect. He alone is without spot and without blemish. What humanity has hungered for — He is. Peasants and fishermen did not imagine Him; it would have been a miracle greater than the wonder of His personality, if they had invented Him. He is without thought of self; He is crucified to the world. Children crowd round His knees; the poor find their riches in Him; the pain-tossed in the light of His countenance become oblivious of their pain; the sorrowful are comforted; the outcasts find themselves again.

His life is the life of sacrifice. All ages have felt the nobility of that. The degraded and the low cannot fall below the feeling that the greatest thing in life is to lay it down. The drunkard will rush to death to save a child from death—his heart feels the spirit of sacrifice which naught can quench. And Jesus Christ is the embodiment of all self-sacrifice. He lays down His life of Himself. The Cross is Sacrifice's last word.

The world of men may undergo changes which will make humanity well-nigh unrecognisable centuries hence. But whosoever has seen Jesus Christ in the perfection of His sinless life, of His self-forgetting love, of His tender sympathy, of His unclouded joyousness, of His self-sacrificing death, has felt the assurance that humanity cannot advance beyond that perfect Ideal which He enshrines. He is God's last word as the ideal for His children.

2. Christianity enshrines the perfect ideal of God.

Apart from Christianity we would have many conceptions of God—but without Christianity we would never have those conceptions of God which are the highest, the noblest, and

the best. We could conceive the omnipotence of God—a God that could crush the universe in the blindness of His power; but the soul that knew it was being crushed would be greater than the blind, unknowing power that crushed it even though that power were omnipotent. We could conceive God as pervading all things, the life of all that is—as the "God-intoxicated" Hindu has conceived Him, an impersonal life and power; but He would be a God with no eye to pity, no heart to sympathise, and no arm to save. But the great things—we could have no conception of them apart from Jesus Christ. And these attributes which are the highest in God are Love, Fatherhood, and Sacrifice.

God's love is revealed in Jesus Christ alone. How otherwise could the love of God be revealed? Love is not a glory in the heavens. Love reveals itself through a personality, looks out through human eyes, speaks through human lips, manifests itself in the thousand activities of sympathy and tenderness. The Divine Love moved among men in the person of Jesus Christ, and when we hear His voice saying, "He that has seen Me has seen the

Father"—we, seeing Him, realise what the love of the Father is. For that Love has become visible and operative among men. And love is sacrifice. The earthly father who sacrifices himself for his child would be greater than a God who knew not that love which is sacrifice. Only Jesus Christ brings us the knowledge that the love of God is the love that sacrifices—the love that lays hold on us, and will not let us go, and empties itself, and endures a cross that we may be blessed and saved. Human love says: Let me carry your burden; the Love Divine says also: Let Me carry your burden—though carrying it mean a cross and a crown of thorns.

And all this brings to the heart the deepest of all things—that God is Fatherhood. For Fatherhood is Love and Sacrifice—and these are the great truths Christ reveals to our souls. Only the voice of Jesus can teach our faces to turn upward, and our lips to falter, "Our Father." The great things, that God is Father, is love, is self-sacrifice, is righteousness and yet forgiveness, is justice and yet mercy—these things come to us through Jesus Christ alone. The perfect ideal of God, with all the

attributes of omnipotence, omnipresence, holiness, love, with all the power and all the will to help and to save, is enshrined in Christianity. Through it alone comes to men the vision of God, the Lover of our souls, the Father of our spirits, the preserver of our bodies, which men beholding have in the ecstasy of self-surrender laid hold upon saying, "Abba Father."

3. Christianity makes these ideals operative in the lives of men and in the development of nations.

It would have been a poor thing to reveal the ideal were there no power conferred to realise the ideal. Christianity reveals a perfect ideal and the power through which it is realised. It has satisfied the soul hunger of humanity—for it has brought God to them. It has revealed the right way of coming into communion with God.

Whereas men had rooted religion and the proper access to God in their own efforts, saying, Keep the law, render sacrifices, and God will be pleased, Christianity revealed the source of all the life divine in God. "By the grace of God I am what I am" became its watchword. Through the vitalising energy of

the Holy Spirit God came into the hearts of men, making them His temple, and in the power of God, the life of righteousness became not a mere dream, but a living, practical reality. And men, no longer running with stumbling feet, but lifted into the chariots of God, wafted on the wings of His Spirit, rose out of the dust, laying hold on their heritage as Sons of God.

For well-nigh two thousand years now it has held the field of the world, and in lives risen from the dead, in nations transfigured, and in a world transformed, Christianity has justified its claim to be the world-religion. The gigantic enterprise of Christian Missions does not rest on a tremendous assumption. That enterprise rests on its own inherent truth, on the experience of that multitude no man can number, who finding Christ found God. On the bosom of that river that sprang in the manger of Bethlehem, there has come to the sons of men whatever of beauty, of goodness, of self-sacrifice, of mercy, of truth, of love that have enriched and now enrich the world. Its power is so great to elevate that whosoever receives it, through that very receiving advances

a thousand years in one day. It comes to the pagan, delivering him from the tyranny of ghosts and devils, and with the revelation of one God, who is Father and is Love, transforms life into jubilee and joy. The world, which to the Hindu is but a "weary and unprofitable maze," for which the best he can desire is that it may be annihilated as speedily as possible, Christianity transfigures; and over everything the sunshine, and the birds, and the sward growing green, writes: "Your Father doeth—your Father knoweth." It came centuries ago to a little rocky wind-swept isle in the Hebrides, and from that isle over a land filled with skin-clad savages the message ran, and the Scotland of to-day is the fruit. And from that Scotland now the message goes East and South, and whithersoever the message comes, the same forces begin to operate. With it comes deliverance from terror, from cruelty, from hell upon earth; and the forces are unloosed which evolve the Christian states and the civilisation of the future.

These ideals which operate through Christianity the world cannot outgrow. They are so great that they demand eternity for their

realisation—so great that we have not yet realised even a fraction of them. So far from Christianity being outworn, the fact is that Christianity in the fulness of its ideal has never yet been tried. Living Christianity is the projection of the perfect life of Christ, of the perfect teaching of Christ, of the perfect revelation of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, into the midst of every generation. These things are so great that the servants of Jesus Christ are unable perfectly to do them. The evils in the midst of Christendom are due not to the Christian ideals, but to the failure to realise these ideals. These ideals of righteousness, purity, holiness, of growth into all the perfection of God—eternity alone will suffice for their realisation. Therefore time shall not outgrow them, and the march of humanity cannot leave Christianity behind—provided humanity shall continue to march God-ward. The claim of Christianity to sway the destinies of men is based on this impregnable foundation—its own inherent truth. Because it is the highest it claims for itself the whole world. And whosoever has realised the truth of its claim will follow the Lord Jesus Christ as He

goeth forth to reveal the highest of man, and the highest of God, and the highest of eternity —to the farthest ends of the earth. They who see the vision must needs follow it, or else the vision passes and they lose it.

THE COMMON GROUND

Common ground of worship—Christianity's compact with non-Christian races on this common ground—Animistic religions—Ancestor worship—Hinduism—Need for sympathetic insight and vision — World must accept the highest.

III

THE COMMON GROUND

THE greatest of all missionaries was St. Paul, and the principle underlying his toils was this: "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." That was the spirit in which Christianity conquered at the first: it is the spirit in which it must conquer now. And the problem which the Commission on the missionary message in relation to non-Christian religions set itself to solve was just this—how best Christians can become all things to all men. The magnitude of the problem can only be realised when we think of the bewildering varieties of the human race and the multitudinous stages of human development from the Animistic worship of man at the lowest to the deep thought of the "God-intoxicated"

Hindu. To Brahmin and Moslem, to the disciple of Confucius, and to all the strange forms under which men worship, can Christianity present itself on common ground, and make good its claim to become all things to all men. The very fact that they worship, whatever the race or creed, is the common ground. "As birds," wrote an Indian thinker in the Vedante, "repair to a tree to dwell therein, so all the universe repairs to the Supreme Being." The expression is infinitely varied, the thing expressed is one. The Red Indian blowing a few whiffs of tobacco towards heaven to propitiate the Great Spirit, and the Catholic with his good incense fumes, are not so far apart as they seem. Those who think that humanity will pass beyond that, forget the power of an instinct mightier than all reason. And the greatest thinkers the world has produced—be he Plato, or Aristotle, or Kant, or Hegel, or Newton—in this they are at one with the lowest fetish-worshipper —they obey the instinct which impels to worship. It is on this common ground that Christianity to-day seeks to meet the non-Christian religions. Let us see how best

Christianity can present its message to the non-Christian nations on this—the common ground of worship.

The first that naturally falls to be considered is the religion of primitive races. Animism is the worship of souls—chiefly the spirits of departed ancestors. But it includes also the spirit of the flood, and thunder, and plague, and diverse others. The one feeling which Animism inspires is terror. "Ghosts of the most diverse kinds lurk in house and village . . . in the forest. They terrify the wood-cutter; in the bush they hunt the wanderer, malicious demons . . . lie in wait for the child from the day of its birth; they swarm round the houses at night; they spy through the chinks of the walls for their helpless victims. The dead friend or brother becomes an enemy, and the coffin and grave are the abode of terror." It is a world filled with fear, at which the aboriginal tribes in Africa gaze. And the terror which dominates them is only equalled by the depths of degradation to which their lives descend. We can realise what a deliverance there comes with the message of Christianity to these poor slaves

of ignorant terror. To be told that the Unseen, which they deemed to be full of hostile forces, was really filled with goodness and love is for them the breaking of their chains. The message of salvation is redemption from the tyranny of evil spirits. "Before I became a Christian," said one who found the great deliverance, "I was always in fear—afraid of the spirits, afraid of the idols, afraid of shadows, afraid of things moving in the dark—but now, thank God, I am free, and am afraid of nothing." Low and degraded though the beliefs of Animism be, yet they are "the effort of fellow-men to grapple with the great problem of existence," and the missionary must rejoice in every element of truth he may find. The Unseen is very real to these harassed people—the missionary has to reveal its true contents. Sacrifice is everywhere — the missionary can rear on it the truth of Christian sacrifice. "To lighten a dark room one does not need to sweep out the dark." The reason why Islam makes such great strides in Africa is that it comes as a deliverance from the terrors of Animism. The sad thing, from the Christian standpoint,

is that this deliverance should be the imperfect deliverance of Islam, and not the full deliverance which comes from the revelation of Divine love. To the Animist, the message of one God, and that a God of love, comes as tidings of great joy. Because there is but one God, there is deliverance from the fear of gods many, gods capricious, gods vengeful, and gods unspeakable. The new life which opens before the convert is a "jubilee of liberty and joy." The centuries have deadened us to that joy, but on the mission field we realise again what thrilled the souls of the early Christians nineteen centuries ago; we feel the throb of the words which sounded in the ears of those early converts from Polytheism, ringing from the depths of a prison — "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice." To the Animist Christianity comes as deliverance from an incubus of terror, and for him its watchword is—Rejoice.

The problem facing Christianity increases in difficulty as it confronts the hoary civilisation and the ancient religions of China and Japan. Confucianism is the dominant religion of China, with its essential teaching of a high

regard for the family and the State. It knows nothing of a Divine love, and has little sympathy with the poor, the outcast, and the erring. It is entrenched behind the national pride which regards all the rest of the world as "Barbarians." Christianity comes to China only as a foreign religion—that of those who insulted China, seized her territory, and demoralised her people with opium. "Race pride and patriotism both protest against acceptance of a creed from such a quarter, and label the Chinese who do accept it as disloyal renegades." And the whole fabric rests upon ancestor worship as the cornerstone. "By it the life of the nation has been moulded to a cohesion which has outlived the changes and vicissitudes of five thousand years." "The man who neglects it seems an inhuman monster, a wretch who has renounced father, and mother, and ancestors." Parents guard their children jealously from all possible influence from Christianity, fearing lest, when they die, they should be left with none to worship them—"unworshipped beggar ghosts in Hades." The prospect of their children abandoning ancestor

worship is a nightmare for the Chinese—the children shrink from causing such dread to their parents. And everywhere idolatry has entered into the very web and woof of society. The great difficulty of presenting Christianity to the Chinese mind can be realised from a vivid illustration used by Dr. Campbell Gibson, "If I addressed this assembly," he said to the World Missionary Conference, "and called you all criminals, you would resent it strongly; but if I called you sinners, you would accept it humbly. In the Chinese language there are no words to express sin and sinners but crime and criminals." A Chinaman, when asked what his sins were, answered, "My wife and my mother-in-law." In China heathenism would almost seem entrenched within an impregnable fortress. And yet there, too, Christianity can build upon common ground. As with the Animist, Monotheism appeals to the Chinese, not as deliverance from terror, but as eminently reasonable. The atmosphere of sympathy, love, and friendliness which Christianity brings, makes its appeal. "The devotion, self-forgetfulness, and self-sacrifice of some Chris-

tians make a deep impression. China has no such men and women," so writes a Chinese. And to the spiritual need revealed in ancestor worship Christianity brings the knowledge of Him in whom all parents and all children live and move and have their being, bound to Him in filial bonds. "The so-called worship of ancestors," writes a missionary, "can easily be Christianised, and should be maintained in this form as a valuable national asset." "It is certainly possible to imagine a transformation of it into the Christian idea of the great Communion of Saints, which binds the seen and the unseen in one vast fellowship." Apart from ancestor worship, China to-day presents the strange spectacle of being a nation practically without a religion. To early Christianity Rome made its appeal — could it be won for the faith? To-day it is the Chinese and the Japanese—the races in whose hands the future of the East will lie, and which are now palpitating with the stirring of new life—which make the great appeal to the Christian Church. "Will their future be the upward path of those who follow the Highest, or the path of tragedy down to the

unknown and troubled sea?" When the Church went forth on the great adventure of conquering the Roman Empire, it was a puny, feeble thing compared to the Church which faces the Empires of the East. And the conquering power is still within it. To-day, in the far East, the discerning eye can see how "the whole confused world of Chinese religion is being shot through and through with broken lights of a hidden sun, which is coming forth in splendour to run a new race in the heavens."

It is, however, in India — that "challenge of the ages"—that Christianity meets its most formidable foe — Hinduism. If the tree be judged by its fruit, then Hinduism stands condemned. All Christian writers are at one as to the "petrifaction of society in the caste system," "the abuse of child marriage," "the infamies of popular idolatry," which prey upon the heart of India. Yet Hinduism has enshrined in its "immemorial thought" profound and vital truths, through which it shares much common ground with Christianity. The Hindus are doubtless the strongest believers in the immortality of the soul whom

the world has ever known. With Hinduism the one redemption is the realisation of unity with the Supreme Being. This, too, is the ideal of Christianity. Only in that is satisfaction to be found. In this Hinduism differentiates itself from all other non-Christian religions. "Though we were to win all you are seeking," its sages say to the Animist, the Confucian, and the Moslem, "we should still be unsatisfied." To the Hindu the world is a mere illusion. The world is nothing compared to God. And it is truly better to say with Hinduism that the world is nothing and God all than to say with the modern materialist that the world is all and God nothing. To the Hindu, existence is the cardinal evil; but to the Christian the cardinal evil is sin. Of the world the Hindu says, "Let it be obliterated"; but Christianity fills the world with God, and elevates its every trade and calling into a holy ministry. In Hinduism the supreme good is absorption in the Supreme Being. And to the Christian also the supreme ideal is to be filled with the Life Eternal—to realise more and more "the life of God in the soul of man." The terms differ, the

images vary, the modes of stretching out the hand alter, but the one thing the worshipper craves is life. And the satisfaction of that craving for unity with God can never find its highest satisfaction except through the fulness of eternal life which Christianity reveals, and which the Spirit of God communicates to the souls of men. All religions are a "prayer for life." The supreme answer to the prayer is Christianity. Its culmination and power came when, on the day of Pentecost, the barriers suddenly were thrown down, and on the hearts of men there poured the encompassing sea of the Spirit. And still the same vivifying Spirit flows into the believing hearts, so that the souls of men find the fulness of life abiding in God, and God abiding in them. This is the answer to the cry which the Hindu has raised for weary centuries—the cry for absorption in God.

If there be one thing most necessary for the effective representation of Christianity to the non-Christian peoples, it is this—the power of vision and of an understanding heart which will enable missionaries to realise the inner meaning of the religions which they seek to

supplant. The Rev. Dr. M. Chatterji, of the Punjab, himself a converted Hindu, tells how, for a long time, he stumbled at the doctrine of Atonement. The Hindus have a vivid sense of the punishment due to the individual for his sin, and to them it is inconceivable that another should suffer for their sins. Christianity suffers great wrong by the crude representations of its doctrines by those who lack the imagination and the understanding which can root its truths in the beliefs which they find operative in the hearts of those they seek to illumine. To a race who hunger for the Unseen, who are ever looking beyond the visible, to whom eternity is the one reality—Christianity can come as the satisfaction of its hunger. It can meet it on common ground.

A great revolution has taken place in the manner in which Christianity presents itself to the non-Christian religions. When a truth has operated for good in the life of a heathen nation, however dim and imperfect it may be, Christianity does not now seek to attack it, but to outflank it. It merges the imperfect in a higher truth. The other religions are no longer regarded as of the devil—they

are recognised as "languages in which God has spoken to man, and man to God." Again and again there occur sentences like this, written by missionaries: "One cannot hear an unhappy old woman cry before a daubed red stone with the cry of her heart, 'O God, help me!' without realising that the utterance of her need itself has a religious value, and brings a return to her spirit." But the recognition that through these religions there come broken syllables of the Eternal Voice to the souls of men only reveals the true way of bringing the perfect knowledge to their hearts. And that Christianity is that perfect knowledge—of that there is no doubt. For whoever compares Christianity to these others—the perfect ideal of purity and self-sacrifice it enshrines in the person of its Founder, the revelation of the Supreme Being as Fatherhood, Love, and Holiness which it brings, and the blessings which it confers on humanity of freedom, and mercy, and beneficence—cannot but feel that it is the highest. The claim for Christianity is this—the world must accept the highest, and it is the highest. And therefore the call rings in the ears of

Christendom to-day: Arise and accept your high calling to make the highest operative throughout the whole world. It is a call to all that is heroic in the Christian Church. If the Church will only present the person of its Founder to the world, then the world will receive. For to-day the quarrel of the non-Christian world is only with Christians—but not with Christ.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE INFANT CHURCH

What the coming of Christianity means—The problems that ensue—Problem of polygamy—Of caste—Of ancestor worship—The necessity for Christianity being again Orientalised—The necessity for the native Church getting a free hand—Mass movements—Judge not.

IV

THE PROBLEMS OF THE INFANT CHURCH

WHAT does it mean to the heathen when to some dark place the missionary comes and lights the torch of Christianity? That great master of English, Henry Drummond, visualises what it means in a sentence: "At Tongoa, on the verandah, in the moonlight, I heard the evening psalm going up on this side and on that. Less than four years ago, from this same verandah, the missionary saw the smoke ascending from roasting human flesh." You see what it means in a flash. Where the awful rites of cannibalism degraded men lower than the beasts, where cruelty and ignorance and vice made their habitation, hither comes Christianity—and in a little while the low music of psalm and prayer rises on this side and on that. The history of missions is the record of that wondrous revolution. To some place in

Africa where the Arab slave-drivers drove their nefarious traffic, where warring tribes drenched the land with blood, comes the missionary and builds his church, his school, and his hospital. And soon the children are learning to read, the sick are tended, and peace lies like a shaft across the land. "A few years ago," says Rev. J. Nettleton, of Fiji, "in the South Seas you could buy a man or a woman for a guinea; to-day you could not buy a scraggy old woman for a million pounds." We see there what the coming of Christianity means. It reveals the unpurchasable value of human life. Christianity is to-day, as it has always been, the deliverance, not from a future hell, but from the present hell of human degradation and misery.

No sooner does Christianity come to a non-Christian land than the process of building up the infant Church begins. "Every soul that is attracted by the gospel and separated from heathenism is a living organism, and immediately it allies itself with other living organisms of the same type and character." Thus an organised church springs up, and having learned to walk, anon begins to work, and immediately it finds itself confronted with various problems

—among these many which the Church in the West has solved long ago, and which the Church in the mission-field must in its turn now solve. One of the Commissions of the World Missionary Conference has dealt with these problems, and their report makes us realise how complex the task of winning the world for Christianity really is. There is the question of what standard the Church will demand of her converts before receiving them. Take the African who has more than one wife. Will the Church require him to put away all the wives except the first ere receiving him into membership? This is the usual condition; but it seems an intolerable wrong to these other women whom he married ere Christianity came to him. How pressing this problem is could be realised from the words of Professor Marais, of South Africa, who dissented from some very moderate sentences in the report which left it optional for missionaries to baptize a polygamist while denying him all office in the Church. Professor Marais would have no compromise with "this deadly foe to pure family life."

In India, will the Church demand that the

restrictions of caste, which grip the Hindu with the strength of centuries, be completely broken? Within the caste-system, 170,000,000 of Hindus are bound together in a unity so strong that the sense of individuality is deadened, and it is next to impossible for a Hindu to separate himself from the social scheme into which he has been born. The millions within this system look upon the multitude outside it with loathing and contempt, and regard the small fraction that have become Christians as pariahs and outcasts. The Church, outside of this system which has been all potent for centuries, is an alien to the life of India, and is not Indian except in a geographical sense. No question is more urgent than that of the attitude which Christianity must adopt towards this all-powerful system. Many missionaries forbid the retention and use of caste names among Indian Christians. It may well be asked whether Christianity has any right to obliterate family traditions and that self-respect which is in itself a virtue and an inspiration. "Why should not a baptized Brahmin hand down the fact of noble ancestry and pure blood in a family name to his Christian descendants?" It is

surely a doubtful procedure to press intermarriage, or even inter-dining, between people of different caste. Even in the West inter-dining between the castle and the cottage is not even dreamed of. Matters such as these are yet to be adjusted.

There is in China the question of ancestor worship, deep-rooted with the sanction of long centuries; must the attitude of the Church be one of utter and uncompromising hostility? All over the world where the new ferment of Christianity sets working amid humanity, questions such as these at once knock at the Church's door demanding an answer. Formerly the Church's answer was an uncompromising negative. But in these days we are rather tired of negations. Every system is not necessarily false because we do not possess it. When a system has survived for ages, it has survived not because it was false but bacause it had some great truth at the root of it. The central fact of Christianity is the realisation that everywhere is some gleam of that light which lighteneth every man, but which shone resplendent in *One*. So even of caste and ancestor-worship. The missionary in our day

must ask what is the *truth* in it. We know to-day the great power of heredity, the great importance of keeping the race pure—and even in caste we can see a seminal truth. But the problem is, how far the Church can recognise that seminal truth in consonance with the great truth—the core of its teaching—the brotherhood of man. These are but some of the problems which confront Christianity when it comes face to face with heathenism.

It is not only in these matters that the modern missionary has altered his standpoint. The whole relation of the Western Churches to the East has been revolutionised. When the era of missions dawned the idea seemed to be to deport to the East the Christian Church as it existed in the West. We now realise the futility of this. For Christianity in the form we possess it is not the Christianity that will commend itself to the East. It was in the East that Christianity sprang. In Galilee a Teacher taught a handful of peasants in vivid metaphors, in the guise of simple stories, the great truth that there was one Father, and that all men were brothers. But the cold, unimaginative Western minds made these metaphors

the basis of creeds and dogmas and legal systems. And this huge system of law and doctrine they began to send again to the East in the name of Christianity. The problem now is this—whether this Christianity is worth exporting to the East? Christianity arose as an Oriental religion, and must it not again be Orientalised ere it can sweep through Asia with its vitalising breath? We are learning now that it is not we of the West who will Christianise the Orient—it is the native Church itself that must do it. We have not the key to that life lived in the plains of India. We can only bring the seed; it is the native Church itself that must sow it broadcast over the land.

From this has sprung a wholly altered relation of the Western Churches to the East. At first the native Church was wholly dependent on the West. Now the aim is to train up the native Church to be as soon as possible self-supporting and self-acting. "The aim of all Western Mission Work," declared an Indian delegate to the World Missionary Conference, "should be to make itself unnecessary." "We open the doorway," said another, "and we

have to see that we get out of it as speedily as possible." Hitherto the Western Missionaries have stood in the doorway and prevented the egress of the influence of the native Christians on their own race. Doubtless the Missionaries distrusted the capacity and wisdom of the infant Church. But it is only by experience that capacity and wisdom come. "It was," declared Dr. Hodgkin, of China, "a very young and a very inexperienced Church to which the Holy Ghost said, 'Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'" But upon the native Church this policy of the Western Church has acted as a withering blight. Kept in tutelage, it did not acquire that confidence in itself which must precede initiative. Taught the dogmas of the West, it was not encouraged to think out for itself the great truths of Christianity. So far it has produced no original thought; kept in leading strings, it has set forth on no voyage of conquest or discovery. The Western Church has feared lest, its control being removed, indigenous Churches might grow up in the East different and separated in sympathy from the Churches

in the West. This was the matter which Bishop Gore emphasised when he declared that continuous life depended on continuous principles, and that the Church had to insist on the principles which are eternal. This is doubtless true. But surely God can be trusted with the future of His own Church. The native Church may make mistakes, but have not the Churches in the West made mistakes? The promise of the Church being guided by the Holy Ghost into all the truth is not a promise to the white men and the Western Church alone. All that the Western Church can do is, in the words of Dr. Campbell Gibson, "to impress on the Eastern Churches the great affirmations of divine truth which are the essence of the Church and of the spiritual life." This the Western Church has done, and will continue to do. If the East is to be won for Christianity, it can only be won by the native Church—by men who can think the thoughts, feel the emotions, and see the things which are only visible to the Eastern eye. The aim of the modern missionary is not, then, to reproduce in the East the Church of the West; his aim is to raise up a Church

which in time will produce its own St. Paul, who will speak to the East the language of the East—and then the day of conquest will come.

It is now abundantly manifest also that it is not through acting upon individuals only, but acting through mass movements, that Christianity can hope to advance with any rapidity. These mass movements occur when whole communities at one time turn towards Christianity. They have occurred in many parts of India and China, and notably in Korea. Many missionaries look with suspicion on these movements. When an entire clan and an entire village suddenly desire to adopt Christianity, their motives are open to suspicion. It is often the yearning for escape from some misery. It is a movement towards material and social betterment. But surely that is no ignoble desire. Every step upwards begins on an elementary plane. When the level is once changed higher levels are attainable. "Hundreds of our best people," writes a missionary, "were swept in on the tide of the mass movement, who, as individuals, would hardly have been sought or reached by any

other method." "Nineteen-twentieths of our Christians," writes another, "are the result of mass movements. Some fall away, more remain, and the general result has been most encouraging; we have many examples of true piety and loyal obedience to Christ among those who came to us at first from mixed motives." Whatever may have been the motive of the clan or village when it moved in a mass, the third and fourth generation, trained and taught, have left that motive far behind. The policy of diffusion over the mass rather than concentration on the individual is undoubtedly the policy of the future. It was the policy by which Christianity won its victories at the first. It was by movement in mass that Scotland was won for Christianity by St. Columba. With King Brude his clan moved in a mass, and Columba received them. And yet there are modern missionaries who look askance at movements in the mass. They must have a high individual standard ere admission to the Church be granted. Terrified lest the Church should be swamped by a flood of "baptized heathenism," they often go to the opposite extreme. It is re-

corded that a missionary who laboured with devotion for twenty years in a certain town was so scrupulous that he only twice ventured to baptize an inquirer. In both cases he found himself grievously deceived. During the same years other men working by his side, by other methods, baptized many hundreds of converts, and built up a strong Christian Church. Missionaries too often forget the weary centuries it has taken to produce the present standard in the West, and how poor a thing that standard is even after all these centuries, and they expect the standard of the West without the Christian heredity of centuries which lies behind the West. Evolution marches with very slow and tardy steps. "A mass movement," writes a missionary, "is an open door, and the Church should press through it with all her might." That is what the Church did in the days of St. Columba; it is what the Church must still do. In India there are fifty millions of outcasts ready and willing to embrace Christianity. The sad thing is that Christianity seems unable to supply the requisite evangelists and teachers. It is by demonstrating to the full, what has already

been demonstrated in a measure, that the religion of Jesus Christ can inspire that vast mass of degraded humanity with self-respect, can raise up to higher levels of thought and ideal, can transform its mud into gold; that Christianity will prove to the world its power to deliver and to save.

There is one sad note that occurs over and again in this report—it is this. The early missions committed the mistake of teaching through English. Instead of bringing Christianity to the children in the schools through their own language, they brought it through the English language, which they laboriously taught. Thus the native Church has so far produced no literature of its own. But what is worse is that the work of the missionaries is so often hampered and nullified by the Atheistical and Materialistic literature which the West pours into the East. From Japan comes the Atheistical teaching of Europe pouring into the Christian spheres in China! When the West has left these pamphlets far behind, they do their baneful work in the unknowing East. And one thinks of Islam—every trader a propagandist; and one thinks

of Christianity, with its labours so often nullified by those reared within its pale, and who have received through it the best in life—and one realises that the greatest obstacle to the triumph of Christianity is not the enemy without, but the enemy within. The Mohammedan does not pride himself on counteracting the progress of Islam—the Christian trader and civilian too often does. "The missionary is hampered," wrote R. L. Stevenson from Samoa, "he is restricted, he is negated by the attitude of his fellow-whites, his fellow-countrymen, and his fellow-Christians in the same island." The teaching of Christianity is sore let and hindered in the mission-fields by the low lives of men who live under its name. "You come to us with your religion," says the Asiatic and the African; "you degrade our people with drink; you scorn our religion, in many points like your own; and then you wonder why Christianity makes such slow progress amongst us. I will tell you: it is because you are not like your Christ." Thus one of the grievous problems facing the infant Church in the midst of heathendom is how best to protect itself against the debasing

influence of degraded men, nominally Christians, and against the attacks of those who, reared in the bosom of Christianity, yet would fain destroy it.

It must always be remembered that the standard by which the infant Christian Church in the midst of heathenism is to be judged is not the standard to which the Christians in the West have attained after the growth of a thousand years. There are those who, seeing the imperfections and feebleness of the converts, and lacking the imagination which in the blade beholds the yellow harvest, are loud-voiced in condemning missions. After many generations Christianity has in the West formed "beaten tracks of respectability"; and along these a multitude who reject the Mastership of Christ are impelled to walk by the forces which pulsate in the very atmosphere they breathe. They owe the decency and security of their lives to the very Christ whom they spurn. And these, looking at the mission-field, demand of the converts of yesterday a character which they themselves owe to the Christianity of many centuries. Nowhere is the precept of Christ,

"Judge not," more requisite than in dealing with the infant Christian Church in non-Christian lands. The Christian converts must be judged, not in contrast with the Christians of the West, but in contrast with the heathenism from which they have sprung. The atmosphere surrounding the Christian converts is the atmosphere of that heathen society in which the Europeans cannot bear that their children should grow up. All that has to be taken into account. It was thus that Origen judged the early Christians of his days: "Compared with contemporary pagans, the disciples of Christ shine like stars in the firmament." Against the background of heathenism, with its foul speech, its unspeakable licentiousness, its polygamy, and its child-murder, its bondage to terror and its indifference to life, its falsehood and dishonesty, let the converts to Christianity be seen, with the dawn of the Christian virtues in their souls, with the speech growing clean, with the mind being illumined, with the heart being softened by love and kindness, with the family life being cleansed, with meekness and gentleness and self-sacrifice beginning their perfect work,

and then they too, like the Christians of old whom Origen saw, will shine before the eye like stars in the firmament. We must look at the infant Church with the calm eyes which behold, not the present but the future which shall be. Now is the sowing-time—anon shall be the harvest. It took æons to pile up the rocks and rear the hills and establish the solid earth; we must not wonder that the Spirit of God, working in the tenderest of all things — souls — should need centuries for His perfect work. If the converts to Christianity must be judged, let them be judged by Christians who have vision and imagination. That they should be judged and condemned by those who are not themselves Christians is futile. For it is the right of every man that he should be judged by his peers.

THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION

The illiterate mass—Mistaken policy in India—Lord Macaulay—Importance of the vernacular—How Christianity became indigenous at the first—Only through the vernacular can it become indigenous now—Importance of Christian colleges as means of reaching the Hindus—The two alternatives.

V

THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION

THE Commission of the World Missionary Conference on Education in relation to the Christianisation of national life, which had Bishop Gore, of Birmingham, for its chairman, has rendered the most valuable service to the missionary expansion of Christianity. There is nothing like it in the literature of missions. Professor Sadler, one of the greatest authorities on the science of education, describes it as "the first serious attempt to arrive at a concerted policy in the field of Christian education." It has explored the whole field of missionary enterprise, and presents facts which are of vital import to the work of Christianising the world. The problem of education is the greatest problem facing the Church in heathen lands. To

realise its vastness one has only to think that out of a population of 293,000,000 in India, 277,000,000 are illiterate, or, to put it otherwise, out of 34,000,000 young people of school age, only 6,000,000 have any educational facilities. Ignorance is the handmaid of superstition, and that vast mass of illiteracy is truly appalling. But even the children of the Christian Church are left also in large measure uneducated, for out of 400,000 Christian children in India, only 168,000, or 45 per cent., are in school. Thus, there is not only the overwhelming mass of illiterate heathenism, but there is actually an ignorant Christian Church growing up in India. If these facts are not enough to make us realise the extent of the educational problem, there is this further fact that, out of 1,000 women, only seven can read or write. When, sixty years ago, the first girls' school was opened in South India, the people exclaimed, "From the beginning of the world it has never been known that a woman could read." But it is the women who make the home, and to be effective the light must shine through the wife and the mother. It is through the schools that

Christianity has rendered its most effective work. And the evangelising agencies, such as the Salvation Army, which have neglected the school, have failed to make an impression on India.

But the effort that has been put forth by the Christian Church on behalf of education has not so far borne commensurate fruit. The reason of that is that the education which the Church imparted has been conducted on wrong lines. So long ago as 1835 a far-reaching decision was arrived at by the Indian Educational Committee, when, by the casting vote of Lord Macaulay, it was decreed that the medium of instruction in the colleges of India should be English and not Sanscrit or Arabic. This was the period of which Lord Curzon declared that the withering blight of Macaulay's rhetoric passed over the field of education in India. Neither Sanscrit nor Arabic was the vernacular of India any more than Latin that of England; but the lead thus given had the effect that English became the medium in the higher mission schools for the instruction of the students. In a sense this was perhaps inevitable.

"Whosoever knows that language," declared Macaulay, "has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and stored in the course of ninety generations." But the result of that access has not been what Macaulay expected, or what the missionaries expected. Instead of training up leaders for the native Church in India, the mission schools have "made the students in thought and habits almost foreigners, and largely out of touch with native thought and feeling." "Students," wrote a missionary from Ceylon, "are prepared for the London B.A. The vernaculars are ignored . . . and youths whose parents talk an Eastern tongue, and who themselves rarely think in any other, are crammed, repeating English, Latin, Greek, or French . . . and do nothing for their own people. They cannot write to their parents in their own tongue, nor read letters sent to them." This isolation to which the education of the mission schools dooms the young Indian is terrible—he cannot become of the West, and he is cut off from the East. "As education is conducted at present," writes an Indian

gentleman, "our girls seem to have been made for studying English and passing University examinations. The poor girls are bribed with scholarships . . . to continue their studies until they lose all their vitality. . . . It is forgotten that the condition of society is such that girls, in spite of University degrees, will not be allowed after marriage to work independently of the husband. More attention ought to be paid to secure for our girls the kind of education they really stand in need of." Truly the rhetoric of Macaulay has produced a withering blight. Education has been merely exercising the memory, not the thinking faculty. The result has been that the native Christian Church is exotic, and all the missionary activity of a century has failed to produce a native Church "Christian in conviction and indigenous in thought." The ludicrous result has been that one can hear an educated Indian often speak with a broad Aberdonian accent, acquired from his Professor in the Scottish College—but that is the most evident result of his training! To this it is not sufficient answer to say that the mission schools have supplied what the Indian

parents want. They desire an English training for their children, but they desire it because along that line the gratifying of ambition lies—the securing of commercial and civil posts. For the Church does not labour to gratify the worldly ambitions of the Indian; its aim is to lay the foundations of an indigenous Church of India; and if its methods fail to produce that, then the failure is grievous indeed. And so far the mission schools have failed in that. It is not through the foreign tongue that a path is won to the heart of humanity. There are stretches of country in Scotland where, if the preacher goes to the people with the English tongue, they are as the rock and he as the storm that beats vainly against it. But let him go to them with their mother-tongue old and dear —Gaelic—and they are as the field of corn and he the breeze that plays upon it. East or West, humanity is the same. The deep things of life only come home to the heart and soul through the mother-tongue. Only through the vernacular can the heart of India be won for Christ. So long as Christianity is in India associated with English, it is only the reli-

gion of the foreigners—a puny and feeble exotic.

The great problem facing the Church is how to train up the preachers and leaders of the native Church so that Christianity may no longer appear to the people as a foreign import pertaining to the conquering race. A very valuable section of the report of the Commission on Education draws an interesting parallel between the way in which Christianity became indigenous in the various provinces of the Roman Empire in the early centuries and the way in which expansion is now sought. Then Christianity became indigenous at once; and Ephesus, Alexandria, Rome, Africa, settled down as Christian communities, developing their special character as Alexandrian, Roman, African, and later as Celtic and Germanic and Anglo-Saxon Christianity. In that period there seemed no risk of Christianity becoming exotic in any district. This was owing to the fact that Christianity came into an Empire which was already furnished with schools, so that Christians and non-Christians shared a common education. Schools were everywhere, and

Christianity used no effort to start schools of its own for secular education. But now in India, no sooner does the process of education begin than thereby the Christian school begins the process of separating its scholars from the illiterate community whence they spring and from the social life of their own race. But there are some parts of heathenism where the conditions of the ancient Roman Empire are now reproduced.

In Japan education is universal, and the percentage of children without schools is less than in Great Britain. There Christians and non-Christians receive the same education, and the danger of Christians becoming exotic is averted. In China also a national system of education is being established. But an edict has recently been issued exalting Confucius to the level of "heaven and earth," and requiring teachers and students to do reverence to his tablet. To this Christians object as idolatrous, and it forms a barrier against the use of the national schools by Christian children. But doubtless this will be overcome. The Chinese ideal of Christianity is that the Christian converts, with the wives and children,

should continue to share the social life of their own race, and that each Church should develop its own local character and colour. Thus did Christianity spread at the first; and thus only can "the glory and the honour of all nations" be brought within the circle of the Holy City. But the method of education which the Church has so far been compelled to adopt has not in this direction been successful. Warneck, speaking to Mr. J. R. Mott on the true missionary method, said, "You men of the Anglo-Saxon race act as if the Lord on the Mount of Ascension had commanded His disciples, 'Go ye into all the world and teach the English language to every creature.'" Beneath the geniality there is a biting truth. Christianity has thus come in foreign garb, through a foreign language, and the result is that, so far as the Church is concerned, the deep and subtle powers of the Indians for meditation and devotion, their great ascetic instincts—the qualities which make the Indian thinkers appear as "God-intoxicated"—these are all outside of Christianity. By the Hindu the Indian Christian Church is still regarded as altogether alien—

so says Rev. Dr. William Miller, the highest authority on Indian missions. When the true aim of missions is considered—the building up of an indigenous Christianity—then nothing more pitiful can be conceived than this, taken as an example, that the native candidates for ordination in the Anglican communion should have, as they now have, to instruct themselves and be examined in the Thirty-nine Articles—articles full of Western controversies. Well might Bishop Gore raise indignant hands to heaven as he denounced the folly of teaching the native evangelists of India these Western documents that breathe, not the atmosphere of Christian love but that of bitter and outworn controversies. It is truly unspeakable folly to introduce to the East the language of Western strife, and to forget that the main aim of missions is the presenting of Christianity in the form best suited to the Oriental spirit.

It is only through the power of education that Christianity can solve the difficulties which now harass it. One of these is the difficulty of raising up leaders in the native Church capable of directing its energies and shaping its policies. So far the native Church has been

sterile; it has depended on the West for leadership. Lord William Cecil emphasised the remedy for this: get the best men and give them the best education. There was only one thing to do—educate! It is futile for Christianity to commend itself in China unless it appeals to the intellectual life of China. From the past China has turned its face to the future, and in the seething ferment of its new life its one cry is for education. Christianity has to study how it can meet that cry; it has to discover the best method by which it can knit the intellectual training to the spiritual training, and both these to the industrial training. And in India the only way by which Christianity can gain access to the millions which are shut in by caste, behind the barriers of the inveterate prejudice of many centuries, is by education.

There is to-day a tendency to depreciate the work of the great missionary colleges which seek to leaven the Hindus with the inspiration of Christian ideals. And so far as these colleges have, by teaching a foreign language and a foreign literature, alienated the educated Hindus from the sympathies

of their own race, the criticism is just. But still it remains true, as Principal Miller has so clearly demonstrated, that it is unsafe to rely on the existing Indian Church for the leavening of the vast mass of the Indian people. The process of leavening must not only work upward from the pariah and the outcasts, it must also work downward from the ruling classes. Were the United States of America heathen, it would be hopeless to rely on a negro Church for the permeating of the ruling race with the Christian ideal. It is equally hopeless, says Principal Miller, to rely on the Indian Church, as yet alien and outside caste, for the Christianising of the national life of India. "The stream of Christian influence rising from beneath must be met by a similar stream descending from above, so that both may unite to prepare for the complete Christianising of national life and lead in the end to the full reception of the gospel by all the races"—thus Principal Miller. If so far the work of these colleges has yielded few converts, yet through the enlightenment they have brought, "the crude materialism and agnosticism of a generation ago has largely

disappeared, and been replaced by a spiritual theism, which, though it calls itself Neo-Hinduism, is in essence distinctly Christian." A great number of the ruling classes in India to-day, when speaking of their ideas and aims, admit frankly that "the great influence in their lives was the teaching they had received in the Christian colleges, and in the inspiration that had come from the example of the Christian professors." And caste has this advantage, that any influence which permeates one part of it, speedily permeates through the mass.

An alarming situation has recently arisen on the field of education in India, owing to the policy adopted by the Imperial Government. Hitherto the Christian colleges were enabled to do their great work through the system of grants-in-aid. But now the aim of the Government seems to be to develop its own colleges, in which the whole system of education is purely secular. These colleges, with the whole wealth of the imperial resources behind them, are outclassing the Christian colleges, and putting them in the background. The question has thus arisen

whether "the dominating influence in the future history of three hundred millions of the human race shall be religious on the one hand, or purely secular and materialistic on the other." "If the Government pursue the present retrograde policy," says Principal Miller, "one of two results is bound to follow. On the one hand, all sense of everything that does not belong to the present material world may perish out of the national life. On the other hand, India may learn to hate a Government whose educational efforts will in process of time be recognised as having resulted in the destruction of all that has hitherto been noble and inspiring in her story. Either of these alternatives will be fraught with ruin." There is truly herein a loud call to the Christian Church to endeavour to save the Government of India from itself. To teach the science of the West and the knowledge of the West to India without bringing also to bear the spiritual forces and the moral restraints which make that science and that knowledge instruments of righteousness, is to confer on India not a blessing, but a curse. Secular education alone has failed to kindle

a moral ideal and to touch the springs of conduct. In India it has been a conspicuous failure.

The one aim of Christian education, whether it works from above or from below, is so to teach that Christianity shall become indigenous and take its true place in the life of a nation, and fulfil its true purpose, which is *not to destroy, but to fulfil.* That was the purpose of the Founder of Christianity—it is His purpose still. An exotic Church will remain outside caste, and so endeavour to erect a new civilisation from the beginning; an indigenous Church will seek its reform. An exotic Church will set itself to exterminate the worship of ancestors in China, and so doing will remain exotic for ever; but an indigenous Church will remember that the honouring of father and mother is in its decalogue the only Commandment with promise, and that the reverence of parents while living and of their memories when dead is a virtue high among virtues, and will claim it as the "testimony of the soul naturally Christian." An exotic Christianity will in heathen lands be iconoclastic, tearing down the old and substituting the new,

and so will meet with bitter opposition; but an indigenous Christianity, honouring the past, exalting the good in its teaching, will bring its best within the great harmony of Christianity, and thus disarming opposition, will, without a shock, transform the imperfect into the more perfect.

The World Missionary Conference will then bring home afresh to the Christian Church the realisation of the true method of presenting and teaching Christianity. In so far as hitherto that teaching has been through foreign languages, it has in a great measure failed of its purpose. The triumphs of Christianity have been through the vernacular. The work which missions have already rendered, teaching the children through the mother-tongue in elementary schools, cannot but evoke admiration. Great communities of pariahs and aboriginals have been gathered into the Christian Church, and the uplift which these experienced has disarmed even hostile opinion. Of this native opinion is most eloquent. "I am a Brahman of the Brahmans," writes a native gentleman, "and belong to the most orthodox school; and I am an Indian and love my country, and I must

confess that the way in which Christianity has raised the pariahs of Madras is beyond all praise, and puts me to shame as a Hindu." It is by this work that Christianity will conquer at the last.

THE TRAINING OF MISSIONARIES

Necessity for thorough preparation—Essential that anguage be mastered—Lord Cromer—A ready-made religion and a ready-made civilisation useless — Necessity for general knowledge, and insight into what is essential to religion — Missionaries unable to argue with Mohammedans—Character the great power.

VI

THE TRAINING OF MISSIONARIES

NOTHING can be of more vital importance to the cause of missions than the due preparation of the missionaries for the work of evangelising the world. And this report makes it very clear that the onward march of the Christian army has been sore let and hindered because the officers who direct it have not been properly trained for their duties. No man is sent to India to serve the Empire without a strenuous course of special training — not even though his task be to superintend forests and plant trees! But too often is it the case that a man is sent to the mission-field, there to combat ancient religions entrenched by hoary and subtle philosophies, without having been specially trained for this most difficult of all tasks. When one thinks

of the diversity of races and civilisations and religions which Christianity has to face, and how each, to adequately meet its demands, needs special knowledge and special preparation on the part of the missionaries, one realises how great this problem is—the problem of how best to equip the missionary for his task. The wonder is that Christianity, though its preachers were men who had no preparation for this special duty save that of hearing the call to preach to the heathen and obeying that call, has so largely prevailed. And if, through the impetus of the World Missionary Conference, no soldier be sent to serve in the Christian army without being fully equipped for his task, then the power of Christianity will forthwith most mightily prevail.

The first requisite of a missionary is that he should be able to enter into the thoughts and feelings of those to whom he seeks to present the message of Christianity. And this is the greatest barrier in the path of the missionary dealing with a race to whom he is an enigma, and who are careful to hide their real thoughts and feelings from him. A missionary who is powerless to pass over the

barrier separating race from race, unable to project himself in some measure into the minds and hearts of the natives, must ever be a hireling and a day-labourer in the great mission-field. He will never inspire and never lead. And to achieve this first essential step on which all the rest depends, the great means is to master the language in which the people speak, and which is the expression of their inner thoughts. To realise what this means we have only to think of those stretches of country in Scotland in which a minister who can only speak English in the midst of a Gaelic-speaking community will find himself for ever an alien to their hearts—knocking at a door to which he has not the key. To conquer the East one must first master the language of the East. When one thinks of India alone, with its 147 languages and its innumerable dialects, the magnitude of this problem manifests itself. Yet it is here, in the first requisite step, that the missionary cause has so frequently failed. Missionaries, owing to defective preparation, are often unable to master the language of the people. They are prepared for the mission-fields as are those who serve

in the ministry of the Church at home, and they are left to acquire the language of the people when they go to the East. In the midst of multifarious duties, at the hands of native teachers, who are incapable of teaching, and who shrink from correcting the white man's blunders, they are left to acquire the language of the natives as they best can. The result often is that they never fully master it, and that they deliver the gospel through a language they have imperfectly learned. Let a congregation in London be left to the ministry of one who could not speak English correctly, and amazement at the blundering of his speech would be the impression that would efface all others. They would smile; but they would not be illumined or enthused. It would be the same with an imperfect speaker of Gaelic in Skye, or a stumbling speaker of Welsh in Wales! And yet the Churches send the missionaries forth to the heathen without having first seen to it that they can speak the language of the heathen. For this strange omission the Churches have accounted by saying that the missionary could more readily learn the lan-

guage on the spot, in the midst of those to whom it is a living tongue. But the weight of the testimony is all the other way. "I think the universal testimony of all those in Egypt, who know Arabic well," declared Lord Cromer, "is that the young man who comes out after having been grounded in Arabic eventually turns out a very much better public servant than the man who merely picks up the language in Egypt."

The report of the Treasury Committee on the organisation of Oriental studies, says: "Assuming that for those who are engaged . . . in the East a knowledge of Oriental languages is essential, we are convinced that for these persons it will be to their advantage to begin their studies at home. . . . The Committee desire to call special attention to the fact that languages like Chinese and Japanese require for their acquisition aptitudes not possessed by every one, and that it is perfectly possible to test those aptitudes in the course of a year's probationary training in England, and that it seems wasteful to send abroad at the public expense, without probation, men who may be unsuited to the service to which

they are appointed." These words are equally applicable to missionaries as to civil servants. The vast majority of missionaries go to the East ignorant of a vernacular, and ignorant also of the life, the history, the manners, the customs, the laws of those whom they set forth to enlighten. No man can discover these things by intuition, and it is only after many blunders and through bitter disappointments that the missionary comes at last to see that his work is in large measure fruitless because he has not been properly trained. And the strange thing is that, though this nation rules more of the Oriental races than any other country in the world, yet there is not in this country a school of living Oriental languages in which those who are to serve in the East can learn the knowledge of the East. It is practically certain that at an early date a college of living Oriental languages will be established by the Government in London, and it will be the duty of the Churches to see that no missionary goes to the East without the living knowledge of the East which such a college can give. We realise now that the Christian Church in heathen

lands cannot be built up by men burning with zeal only, and who think they can impart to savages a ready-made civilisation and a religion which has been transmuted into a Western mould. By such methods the Kaffir may be outwardly Europeanised; but he is not Christianised. The missionary of the future must have all the training of a specialist ere he turns towards the East.

No field of the missionary enterprise needs so much training on the part of the missionaries as the Mohammedan lands. And there could be no severer condemnation of the missionary training hitherto given than the saying of an Arabic scholar, quoted by President Douglas Mackenzie, of Hartford, the Chairman of the Commission on the training of missionaries. "The Christian missionaries," said the Eastern scholar, "in some parts of the world neglect Mohammedans because *they cannot argue with them.*" The fault does not lie with the missionaries; it lies with their training. They took the line of least resistance; they neglected the field which was hardest to till. They had not been taught how to break in that ground and sow the seed in the long-drawn furrow.

They knew neither the language thoroughly nor the history which the language enshrined. Ere they learned the vital matters they were put to work. Their preparation was haphazard and occasional. "It is better," declared President Mackenzie, "to let a mission station suffer for two years than cripple an able man for forty years."

It must not, however, be forgotten that there are other requisites for the missionary besides a knowledge of languages. The missionary must regard himself as a medium for the transmission of the healing touch of Jesus Christ to a suffering and perishing humanity. And to this end he must have his own heart pulsing with the sympathy and the tenderness of Jesus Christ. On the mission-field, as at home, the primal force is character. And in the great Christian army, men and women, whose lives are transfigured with the Spirit of Christ, who through their acts of love make His life of love credible and visible, though they be not gifted with the gift of tongues, can yet find an honourable place. It is a great thing to teach the sayings of Christ with power and

force; it is a greater to live the life of Christ visibly before men, impressing it upon them. From the conquering host of Jesus Christ these cannot be spared. Their training must be in that mystical life of the Spirit, which will be hereafter the national genus of the Church of India.

If anything be now perfectly manifest it is this, that in the training of missionaries the Church must only aim at the best. If the Church is content with the second-rate, then it gets something very much worse. All over the East the people are realising the importance of education. The Chinese are having rapidly diffused among them the knowledge of the West. And the missionary must be abreast of that knowledge, otherwise his ignorance will be shown up, and he is liable to the retort, "If you cannot tell me earthly things, how shall I believe when you tell me heavenly things?" To-day there is no calling which needs such a preparation as that of the missionary's. It is those who have received the best University education who make the most successful missionaries. Those who have not had such a training are found to be "narrow and touchy,"

"lacking in initiative," and "in need of constant direction." The training of a University gives a man a wide outlook; enables him to rise to a reasoned conception of the relation of Christianity to other religions. To-day the missionary must be generous to other religions, must be able to compare doctrine to doctrine, ideal with ideal, and must guard against a false antagonism to the non-Christian religions. He must have a vision of the world's need and long search after God—and of the satisfaction of that need. And he must distinguish what is essential from what is non-essential in the form of Christianity in which he has himself been trained. It would be deplorable if the Christian Church in India or Africa were to have to undergo the pangs and turmoils which the Western Churches have suffered in the process of ridding themselves of the excrescences on the body of Christianity. It must be the ideal, the life, and the power of the gospel only—and not these Western moulds and theories—which the missionary must bring to bear on the East. The missionary must be able to distinguish between the gold and the dross. The fires of controversies have cooled, and if he have an open

mind and a seeing eye, he can discern the pure gold. And it is that pure gold, tried and purified, that he recommends to the infant Churches in the mission-field for their acceptance, and for their building up in the faith. The dross—he must leave it all behind, at Gibraltar or Suez. It is only a missionary campaign thus informed and thus directed which can successfully cope with the great task of "transforming the Orient so that it shall be both thoroughly Oriental and fully Christian." It is not as one who is bringing God that the missionary must turn towards the East; but rather as one who "is going to find God already there." And above all the life of the missionaries must be the reflection of that ideal which they seek to present to the world —the projection of the life of Jesus Christ into the midst of the heathen nations of to-day. To that end there must be no mental and no spiritual stagnation. The running stream must ever be replenished. The true missionary's training is a process which never ends.

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THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH AND STATE

Christianity in relation to non-Christian Governments—A varying problem—Changed attitude of Christianity—Will not accept blood-money—Policy of the "Mailed Fist"—Co-operation with Governments in sphere of education—Unsatisfactory attitude of British Government towards Christianity in Africa.

VII

THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH AND STATE

"There is no theory so perfect but in its application to human affairs it has to be modified."

WE are accustomed in Scotland to the problem which this report discusses with a fullness of world-wide detail—the problem of Church and State. If there are those who think that the difficulties inherent in the right relation between the civil and the religious power are peculiar to our country, they will find in this report that whithersoever Christianity comes, there the same problems emerge. The chairman of the Commission, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, must have felt that these problems presented by the Christian Church in India and China were strangely familiar. He has had long experience of the problem at home—that "hitherto

insolvable problem of the relations between the Church and the State and the discrimination of their respective spheres. Those who have come to the study of the documents laid before the Commission, with memories of ancient and modern conflicts in the ecclesiastical and civil history of Europe, must have recognised strange emergencies of the same contending principles in the contact of the expanding Church with Governments, which, for the first time, have had to take account of Christianity both as a destructive and a constructive power, acting as *imperium in imperio*, and contending for a law and a loyalty different from and higher than those recognised by any State"—thus the report. If, at home, where the Church has to do with a Government which has been permeated by Christianity, and which governs according to its principles, there be difficulties in defining the true relationship of the one to the other, these difficulties are increased tenfold when the Church has to do with a Government which is non-Christian, which governs often according to principles wholly antagonistic to the Christian ideal, and which adopts an atti-

tude, not of embarrassing favour as at home, but of open or covert hostility. The problem of Church and State at home is but a puny matter compared to the problem of Church and State in the non-Christian lands. The extent and colour differ; the problem is one.

Not only is this problem co-extensive with the Christian Church, but in every country it appears in a different aspect according to the varying stage of the nation's development. In proportion as a nation advances in civilisation the problem becomes less difficult. Thus, in Japan, the problem of missions in relation to Government has ceased to exist in any acute form, and the missionaries enjoy a freedom of action greater than they possess in some lands under Christian rule. It is otherwise in Persia, where freedom of conscience is an unintelligible term and toleration a violation of religious obligation. In China there is a deep-rooted suspicion of missions as the organs of foreign powers which mapped out China as their prey, which forced upon it the nefarious opium traffic, and whose aim seemed to be to evangelise at the point of the bayonet. There the whole policy of the

country differentiates against the Chinese Christians, so that they cannot enter Government schools and colleges without adoring Confucius, cannot be put on the electoral rolls, and cannot become civil officials. For the missionary to invoke the help of his Consul, or call in the aid of a Western Power to procure greater freedom, would only increase the resentment of the nation among whom he labours. In India and the African Protectorates the problem is again different. There Christians rule over peoples of considerably advanced civilisation, as in India, and over those of low development, as in Africa; but in the East the ruling Power is pledged to neutrality. The problem is complicated in India by the Native States—three hundred in number—with whose internal affairs the Imperial Government does not interfere unless gross misgovernment necessitates. In these the missionaries often find difficulties of access, and difficulties in procuring sites and houses, and it is unwise to appeal to the supreme Government. In Egypt the problem is again different, for there the Khedive, a Moslem, rules, con-

trolled by a British administrator, and common-sense demands a tender care for Moslem susceptibilities. The strange result is this, that Government money, which is largely provided by the Christians of the country, is expended in the payment of Mohammedan sheiks, who teach the Koran in Government schools to Mohammedan boys, while no grant whatever is allowed for the payment of Christian teachers for Christian children! From these instances it is manifest how various are the forms in which this problem presents itself, and how difficult it is to lay down any law as to the right relation of the Church to the State which shall be applicable everywhere.

There is no doubt that Christian missions in the past suffered from the adoption of a wrong attitude towards the native governments. In China Christianity presented itself as a foreign power, forcing the door by the gun and the sword. The grim jibe of Lord Salisbury was in a measure true, that to the native races there came first the Bible, then the trader, and then the sword! But in those days the missionaries' ideal was to

rescue individuals from the disaster that was to come; and they reposed for safety on the fact that they were subjects of a Western Power. In our day a different ideal prevails. The missionaries now realise their duty to the Government of the country where they labour, and that their supreme object is to link their religious work to the common weal. A different conception has arisen of the civil power. Even in heathen lands the powers that be are ordained of God. They are the instruments of maintaining order and of punishing the evil-doer. Consequently missionaries seek to co-operate with the civil power, and avoid as far as possible the attitude of antagonism. To-day missionaries are of one mind in desiring the strength and stability of the nation in which they work, and they would no longer call in their own Government to force upon that nation an unwelcome policy. It is a great hindrance in the progress of Christianity in China that converts should incur such grievous disabilities —should find themselves deprived of the franchise, debarred from all public offices, and their children admitted to the public

schools only on condition that they worship Confucius; but to seek the removal of these disabilities by the pressure of the Western Powers would be fatal. That would only increase the resentment against Christianity as a foreign import antagonistic to the national ideal. And though for a time to become a Christian means to lose one's heritage in the national life, yet that is better than having the heritage restored by the guns of a foreign Power. And it is open to question whether in the long run these disabilities are not a help to the cause of Christianity. Religion has ever taken root downward, and spread forth its branches upward when the heel of the persecutor was upon it. When belief triumphs over difficulties and loss, then character is formed. The triumph of Christianity must not be identified in the native mind with the triumph of foreign aggression. Freedom must come by the permeating of the national life by the Christian ideal from within—and not by the strong hand of a Christian Power from without. In the sphere of Christian missions the policy of the "Mailed Fist" is a thoroughly discredited

policy. It is Islam and not Christianity that appeals to the sword.

There is no more impressive demonstration of the new spirit which now animates the missionary enterprise than the change which has taken place in regard to demands for indemnities for the loss caused by outbreaks of fanaticism and the destruction of mission property through lawless turmoils. The Churches are now unanimous in refusing to accept indemnities even for the murder of missionaries. The reason is that such indemnities could only be exacted by the force of a foreign Power, and Christianity must not appear in China or elsewhere as something which can only exist and grow when it has the "reeking tube and the smoking shard" behind it. Whatever indemnity might be exacted from the Government by rifles and gunboats, would have eventually to be paid by the people. To force them to pay such indemnities would only be the raising of another barrier against the acceptance of a religion which would appear to them as a despoiler. Thus it has come about that no Church will now accept "blood-

money" in any shape or form. They will have nothing to do with the sword as a means for defending or propagating the gospel of peace.

It is, however, in India that we can now see Christianity repeating afresh the conditions which are to us so familiar, and entering upon working arrangements with the Government regarding some of the spheres of Christian activity. In the field of education the missionaries have been the pioneers; and the Government, realising its duty to the people in this respect, has co-operated with the Churches by giving grants-in-aid. It is through this co-operation with the Government in the sphere of education that the Christian colleges have exercised so potent an influence by leavening the Hindus with the principles of Christian morality and polity. Now, after long centuries of Christianity, we at home have not yet been able to draw the line between the functions of the Church and the State in the matter of public instruction, and it is not to be wondered at that in India the line of demarcation is oscillating violently. The

remarkable fact is this, that in India, by the help of the Government, the Churches have extended their educational work enormously. While the Government gives no help towards religious instruction, the missionaries are left free in their religious teaching. The schools thus supported by Government grants are subject to Government inspection and Government restrictions, but the missionaries faced by the alternative between Christian work under these limitations and Government work which is in principle non-religious, and may become anti-religious, have no hesitation in accepting the former. As we have seen, what the Churches fear is that the grants-in-aid may come to be so administered as to militate against the missionary schools. While in India, as at home, there are a few who disapprove of Christian institutions being supported by Government, yet the great majority are grateful for the help and co-operation of the Government. And when the Government restricts the activity of missionaries, and forbids them entering some territories, they console themselves with the thought that 'there is so much unoccupied land to be

possessed in India itself that a very special Divine call would be needed to justify a spiritual raid across a forbidden frontier." Thus in India the missionaries acknowledge that the civil power has also its Divine sanctions, and that the Church cannot be isolated from it.

The great struggle of the future will lie undoubtedly between the two great Theistic religions—Christianity and Mohammedanism. It is remarkable that it is in the impact between these in Africa that the only strong complaint emerges against the attitude of the British Government towards missions. In Egypt we are administrators and not rulers; but even there it may well be asked whether our policy should not be the policy of those who are Christians first and administrators afterwards. There can be little doubt that, judging from the complaints of missionaries, in the Sudan and in Northern Nigeria, the Government differentiates in favour of Islam and against Christianity. In these regions Christian missions are not allowed free scope. "In Nigeria," declares a missionary, "the Government, nominally neutral, is in reality any-

thing but neutral—it bolsters up the Moslem." It is not only extraordinary, but also painful, to hear strong complaints of the attitude of the Gordon Memorial College at Khartoum towards Christianity. The influence of the college is Mohammedan; the Koran is taught, while no provision is made for teaching the Bible or Christian prayer. When one thinks of that fearless Christian crusader whose name that college bears, these things bring a feeling akin to humiliation and consternation. Has Christianity sunk so low as this in the face of Islam? It is truly one of the great ironies of history that Mohammedanism should be conquering Africa under the ægis of a Christian Empire. That it should be so may be a matter outside the sphere of the Christian Government; but that it should be actively encouraged by the Christian Government cannot be otherwise designated but as a "policy of sheer idiocy." Formerly the warlike pagan tribes kept Islam at bay; now these tribes are conquered by the British power, and in the Britannic peace the emissaries of Islam have free scope. It will scarcely be long endured that the missionaries of Christianity should not

have free scope also. The British Government in Africa will speedily learn the folly they commit who develop the forces which are antagonistic to their own ideals. This will, doubtless, be among the first matters dealt with by that permanent organisation which has been established by the World Missionary Conference to watch over the imperial aspects of missions.

There is a curious parallel between the relations which are growing up in India of Christians to the Government and the relations which exist at home as the result of the slow growth of centuries. In India Christianity is manifesting itself as the greatest power working for righteousness, and the State which seeks the welfare of the people cannot be indifferent to that which works most effectively for the national weal, and thus the system of grants-in-aid has arisen. At home the State felt, too, that it could not stand aloof from the power that makes for righteousness—and National Churches have been the result. In India a Rajah is favourably impressed, and he gives a site and a tract of land to a mission, and the Church which

at home may not approve of any direct relationship whatever with the State, and strongly deprecates such relationship, receives the grant of site and endowment of land with gratitude from the non-Christian Rajah. If these endowments be lawful at the hands of a Rajah in the East, surely they cannot be wrong at the hands of a Christian Government in the West. The relation in which missions stand to Governments in non-Christian lands throws an interesting light on problems which have sore vexed the Scottish nation. Out of the East once more light may break forth. One result of the World Missionary Conference may be the creating of an atmosphere in which the relations between Church and State may be at last seen in its right proportion. It is a matter which can never be settled by rules and axioms. The line of demarcation must be drawn in loops and curves.

THE PARAMOUNT FACTOR

The native Church—How Christianity spread at the first —World must be evangelised by the native Church— Already begun in Manchuria and Korea—The causes which make the native Church the instrument—Indigenous—Knows the language—A living demonstration— The enthusiasm of first love—Principal Rainy and the native Christians.

VIII

THE PARAMOUNT FACTOR

CAN the world be won for Christ? Can one ideal of life be made operative the wide world over, and thus the era of universal peace become possible? Without it such an era can never come, for divergent ideals will necessarily conflict. If any seek to answer the question by contrasting the masses of heathenism, entrenched behind the power of ignorance and superstition, with the Christian Church of the West, the conclusion is inevitable that, if there be no power but the power which the West can bring to bear on the East, the task is hopeless. The West has been working for over a century, and it has only prepared the way for future work. That is all it has effected. But this work is not the work of the Western Church

alone; it is the work of the African Church, of the Indian Church, of the Chinese Church —in a word, it is the work of the native Church, indigenous in every land. It is when we look at the problem thus that the mood of despair passes, and we reach the conviction that not only can the world be won for Christ, but that the conquest will be soon.

It is from the past that we gain assurance in the present. And if we look back to the beginning, and ask how Christianity won its wonderful triumphs in the Roman world, we will find that it was because Christianity became indigenous in every country, and every convert became a missionary. This is what Gibbon depicts in a sentence: "Every convert to Christianity felt it a sacred duty to diffuse among his relatives and friends the inestimable blessings which he had received." We can see the process going on. For a handful of poor men life is suddenly transfigured by the great message of the Gospel, and they go straightway forth each to his friends and neighbours saying, "I was poor, and wretched, and unhappy; life was hard and sorrow was over me like a cloud; I heard of Jesus, and though I

expected nothing I went to hear, and lo! my life is renewed; love again throbs through my heart, hope again has shot the dark clouds with radiance; I have tasted that God is good and gracious—come thou and taste also." It was not by the Apostles, or the great Inspired, that the Roman world was won for Christ; it was by the nameless common multitude who, having tasted the living water, went forth with the urgent call, "Come, taste and see—God is life and love, and God is for you." It is a man's friend who can speak to him so; only in his own language can an invitation come to him compellingly so; a stranger and a foreigner cannot find the words which will wander to his heart so. He must be of one heart and one mind with them who would win men so. There are things so deep and sacred that a stranger intermeddleth not with them.

Therein, then, lieth the assurance of triumph for Christianity. The missionary will not win the world—the native Church in every land will win its own land. The missionary opens the sluice—thereafter he can only stand and watch the living waters spread. His failure

has been that he thought that he himself was to be the living water; he did not realise that he was called only to open the sluice. Hence came his efforts to withstand the swift flow of the stream. He was afraid that without his hand the stream might run into devious channels. He thought he was called to shepherd the rain-clouds. He has to learn that, after a nucleus has been formed, a few hundreds gathered into the Church, he and his agents cease to be the paramount factor in the diffusion of the gospel. The work passes from his hands into the hands of the indigenous Church. Instead of being the ruling force, he must be content to become a very small factor in the work of conquering the world for Christ. He has found it difficult to descend from his throne of superiority; yet he must descend speedily, for the sowing only is his and the reaping-time has come—and the reaping is for others. The missionary whose policy exposes him to the taunt that his Church is the "missionaries' Church" is a missionary who does not know his business.

Whoever would realise this has only to look at those mission-fields where the power of the

gospel has been most potently manifesting itself in the building up of the Church of God. There are countries in which Christianity has won great triumphs in these last years But in every case the triumphs have been won by the native Church, and not by the foreign missionaries. In Manchuria a strong and living Christian Church has been evolved from " the mass of foreigner-hating idolaters who filled the land." Of 30,000 converts baptized in twenty years that veteran missionary, Dr. John Ross, declares that only about 100 were baptized as the direct result of the preaching of the missionaries, the rest—29,900 —were brought into the Christian Church through the influence and work of the native Christians. But the brightest example of this is the Church in Korea. There, under the power of a remarkable revival, the Church has made such strides that it looks as if Korea would speedily become a Christian State. A great part of that triumph is owing to the fact that the native Church has had the responsibility laid on its heart and conscience of winning their brethren. In some cases in Korea it has actually been made a condition

of Church membership that the applicant should have endeavoured to win others to Christ. A remarkable form of collection has sprung up in the Korean Church—a collection of "days of service." In the offertory the worshipper deposits, not money, but a pledge of the number of days of personal service he will give to the cause of Christ in the coming year. At one service a collection was taken of 67,000 days of personal evangelising work! The work which one native convert can do is strikingly illustrated by Dr. Christie of Monkden. "A patient came to the Monkden hospital many years ago," he writes; "when admitted he had never heard the gospel, but before he left he had a clear knowledge of Christian truth, and showed an intense desire to make it known to others. For many years he witnessed for Christ, most of the time without salary of any kind and under no control but that of his heavenly Master. The missionary who had charge of the district where he laboured till his martyrdom by the Boxers tells us that he was the direct means of leading at least *two thousand* souls into the fold of Christ."

The spirit which shines so brightly in Korea and Manchuria is working all over the mission-fields. In Pekin University the Christian students have banded themselves together to evangelise their own country. When facts like these are manifest on the horizon, when the love which stirs in the heart of the convert towards God straightway seeks to embrace his brethren, when one convert ere his martyrdom wins two thousand souls for his crown —then we realise that the paramount factor in missions, so far as human agency is concerned, is the native Church, and that through it the world is to be won for Jesus Christ.

The reasons which render the native Church the most potent instrument of evangelisation are manifest. They can be stated as follows :—

1. The missionary is exposed, in China and India and all over the East, to the prejudice which is everywhere current against the foreigner. This prejudice is not unreasonable. When we recall the experience which China alone has had of the foreigner; how opium was forced on the Chinese Empire by the sword of the West; how "treaty rights" have

been but another name for "moral wrong" —then a prejudice against foreigners is quite intelligible. The missionary is thus exposed to the calumny that he is a paid agent of the hated foreigners, the enemies of the East. The native Church is free from this great impediment. It embodies Christianity, not as a foreign import, but as an indigenous growth. It is the proof that Christianity is not hostile to the national life, but seeks its ennobling and its strengthening.

2. Whereas the missionary is rarely able to master perfectly the language of the people, and finds it the work of a lifetime to understand their ways of thought, the native Christian starts with a perfect command of the idiom, and a perfect knowledge of the minds and hearts of those whom he seeks to reach. The advantage which this gives him in enforcing the truths of the gospel is incalculable. Where the missionary can only go "about it and about," the native evangelist can from the first pierce down to the very heart.

3. The native Church is the demonstration to the people of what Christianity can do for the transforming and ennobling of the com-

mon life. It is difficult for the non-Christian to realise how life can be lived apart from the ancient ways in which he has been reared. The native Christian Church shows him that it is possible to live on a higher plane in the new organisation which the Christian Church provides. The well-organised native Church is the visible witness how a social life of a higher type is possible through obedience to the Gospel. When the question was put at a Christian gathering in China, "Will those stand up who have been attracted to Christianity by their Christian neighbours?" the missionaries were not a little surprised when the bulk of the audience stood up. Herein is visible the power of the native Church as compared with the missionary. By the practice of the Christian virtues, by the growth of knowledge and the power knowledge brings, the people see how a higher life is possible —and seeing, they, too, call for Christian teaching, and seek a place in the new and higher order. Thus the Christian Church grows.

4. There is also manifested in the native Church that enthusiasm which the first impressions of the gospel arouse in the hearts of men.

We in the West have been in a measure deadened by custom to the beauty and power of Christianity. We have known it from the first; custom has staled it. But in the East it is as it was at the first when Jesus walked in Galilee and when at Pentecost His disciples were so filled with the power of the new Spirit which possessed them that their tongues were as "tongues of fire," and in the might of a divine enthusiasm they went forth to conquer the world. Thus it is to-day when Christianity comes fresh to a race, and Jesus Christ manifests Himself for the first time to the eye of the spirit. Then comes the glow which came at the first — and the native Christians to-day, like the Christians of old, speak with the burning "tongue of fire."

It is the native Christian who will win the world for Christ. Of that there is no doubt. The Western Church can only prepare him for his task. And in preparing him the Church must be careful not to separate him from his own people. Though he be "in Christ," yet he must ever remember that "he is one of his own race, and continue in their manner of

life and national customs in so far as these are consistent with the Christian life." The native Christian should never be in the pay of the Western Church. As such he appears to the people to be an agent of the "foreign devils." Only as a member of the native Church, and responsible to it alone, can he wield his full power. When we think of the long and hard campaign before the Church ere the world is won for Christ, we can be of good courage. From hand to hand the sacred torch shall pass until the whole world is illumined. "We men in the West," wrote Principal Rainy in answer to the greetings of the Madras College students, "have no better claim in Jesus Christ than you have. We possess nothing so precious —we value nothing so much—we have no source of good so full, fruitful, and enduring —we have nothing to compare with the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him we bear witness. And we would gladly consent that you should cease to listen to us, if you would be led to give your ear and heart to Him." That is the true attitude of the West—having brought the gospel then to stand aside, gladly consenting that the East should cease to

listen to the West, rejoicing to behold the East listening to Jesus Christ alone; laying it as a sacred charge on the hearts and souls of the men and women of the East to make known to their own people the glad tidings as they receive them. It has already been fully demonstrated on the mission-field that Christianity evokes the most intense and passionate devotion. Whenever belief, whatever it be, lays hold on men so, it inevitably propagates itself. The love and passionate ardour which Christianity inspires, the spiritual powers which it unlooses — these are the dynamic force through which the world will be won for Jesus Christ.

THE IMPELLING MOTIVE—"FOR MY SAKE"

Necessity for a strong base for Christian army—The question of diffusion or concentration—Diffusion the historic policy—Motives impelling Church forward—Needs of man—And the glory of Jesus Christ—Motive of personal obligation to Jesus Christ.

IX

THE IMPELLING MOTIVE—"FOR MY SAKE"

IT is in those countries where Christianity has been rooted for centuries that the last word will have to be spoken regarding the issue of the conflict of Christianity with the non-Christian religions. The power of an army depends on the force behind it at home, on the sinews of war which the home-base is able to provide. No army, however eager, can win a campaign if the line of communication with its base be cut, if behind it there be not the self-sacrifice which will continue to fill its depleted ranks, and the increasing power which will enable it ever to push forward its advance guard. The question, from this point of view, resolves itself into this—whether there is in the Churches at home sufficient vitality, self-sacrifice, and spiritual power to maintain the

campaign against heathenism, and to enable an advance to be made with a force which will compel victory. The Church in the mission-field will not rise higher than the level of spiritual power and self-sacrifice which the Church has attained at home. If the Church is failing to fill up its ranks at home—it is hopeless to think of conquering abroad. From the mission-fields there comes to the Churches the call summoning them to examine their resources in face of the stupendous task which lies before them.

Outside the utmost circumference within which Christianity brings its influence to bear on the non-Christian races, there are, as we have seen, over 120,000,000 of various nations and tribes as yet wholly unreached by the gospel. Is Christianity at once to bring the power of the gospel to bear on these, or is it to leave them a prey to the powers of darkness? There are those who would say that the true policy of Christianity is the policy of concentration and not of diffusion; that the wiser course is to strengthen the power of Christianity in the countries already occupied, rather than wasting its strength in futile

efforts to enter the unoccupied lands. This is the old familiar cry that Christianity ought first of all to fully Christianise the countries which it has occupied ere it proceeds to the regions beyond. When our cities at home are strewn with the wreckage of humanity, why go abroad to evangelise the heathen? When India is only touched by the gospel, why think of Thibet or Bhutan until India be won? Let the work of salvage be first done among the flotsam and jetsam of humanity strewing our streets; or, if you will, let it be fully done in the countries already occupied—and when that is done, then think of a further advance. Let the one hundred and twenty millions wait? So says the objector. But the whole of the lessons of history are against this plausible reasoning. Christianity does not pause till every wrong be righted and every dark place illumined in the sphere of its occupation ere it stretches forth its arms to the regions beyond. Asia was not won for Christ when the tentmaker of Tarsus crossed the Hellespont carrying the gospel to Europe.

If Christianity had tarried in Asia until Asia were wholly won for Christ, Europe would

never have been Christianised. Ireland was not wholly Christianised when Columba, impelled by the missionary spirit, put forth to sea in his frail coracle, and landed in Iona, bearing the torch of the gospel to heathen Scotland. It was often when at home the cause of Christianity was in sore peril that its missionaries went forth, as if in haste, to the unoccupied lands. It was when Italy was ravaged by the invaders that Gregory dispatched his emissaries to heathen Britain, and through a country blackened by Lombard fires Augustine passed on his mission. Such was the unquenchable faith that of old the followers of Jesus Christ had in the greatness of their cause and in the power which lay behind them, that no perils crowding round them at home made them ever falter in their purpose, or doubt that the power of their Lord was equal to the task of conquering the world. If to-day the Church be faced with sore problems and grievous perils at home, yet it is when Christianity still persists in stretching forth its arms to the uttermost ends of the earth that the followers of Jesus Christ evince the same high faith in their

divine calling, the same certainty that they possess the heavenly treasure. Through the stretching forth of the arm of old, Christianity developed the power which conquered; and it is through the same stretching forth of the arm that Christianity to-day will continue to develop the same conquering power. When Christianity was a living power it never, in the past, paused at the boundaries of unoccupied lands; if it would to-day prove that the power and the life are still in its midst, it will prove it by refusing to pause at the boundaries of the lands which are as yet unoccupied. When Christianity refuses to pause at any frontier it is only acting according to the operation of the laws which regulated its expansion for nineteen centuries. It persists in acting on the teaching of the centuries rather than on the theory of an hour.

However much the policy of pause and concentration may have of recommendation behind it (and doubtless it has much), yet there are motives which impel the onward march of Christianity, and these cannot be gainsaid. The call which sounds in the ear of Christians, summoning them to action, is not

the call of opportunism, it is the call of human destitution. Wherever men lie in the degradation and brutality of ignorance, hence the call comes to the Christian Church. The vision of the children of the All-Father perishing in ignorance cannot be blotted out from before the eyes which have once seen Christ—blotted out by theories of opportunism! No man has ever come near to Jesus Christ, or lain with head on His breast as John lay in the upper chamber, without hearing the heart of the Lord beating with that passion of love for all men which would bless and save humanity. No race can appropriate Jesus Christ to itself alone, saying "He is mine." The heart of Christ throbs with the love not of one race, but of all races—the love of universal humanity. And the man who has listened to the beating of His heart will refuse to pause at any frontier; he will recognise no boundaries in the outflow of that love to men. In the love of God to men, flowing to them in Christ Jesus, there can be no compartments. To that love the necessities of men, wherever they are, will unceasingly call. When the Church refuses to hear the call of

human need from beyond the Himalayas, or from the recesses of Africa, the Church will have ceased to share in her Lord's passionate love to men.

It is not merely the destitution of man which impels the Church ever forward, but deeper than that is this motive—the glory of the Church's Lord demands it. His command is universal, and the Church in very loyalty must obey. It does not redound to the credit of the Church, nor to her conception of what the glory of her Lord demands, that after all these centuries His universal command should still be unfulfilled. He standeth still before the eyes of His people, and pointing to His hands and His feet, He says: "Go, tell every creature." In the fulfilment of that command the Church owes it to her Lord to suffer no frontier to stand in the way. No appeal to opportunism, no theorising regarding concentration, can make the Church deaf to the Lord's universal command. If Christianity pauses before barriers, and suffers millions of men to live and die with no opportunity of hearing of the life and death of Jesus Christ, it only means that Christians are not

alive to the sacrifice which the glory of the Lord demands of them.

But the Church in its present stage of development is unequal to the great work of bringing the power of the gospel to bear on all nations—of rendering the universal command operative. What the Church needs, then, is the deepening of her own spiritual life, the discovery of the spiritual power which is within her, the quickening of her energies through the lifting of the Church to a higher level of faith. The power of Christianity as a missionary force is the measure of the Spirit of Christ which it possesses. What the followers of Jesus Christ, need is to have awakened in them the sense of personal obligation. Let the Church bring its members each face to face with Jesus Christ, and let them in His presence ask themselves what He has done for them. Let them scan the blessings which enrich their lives, and which Jesus alone has brought them. Let them recall the childhood cradled and sheltered in the pure family life, surrounded by every ennobling influence with which piety could encircle them; let them think of all the gifts of

charity and healing and mercy and beauty which have enriched them; let them live again in that hour when, through the vision of Christ, the Divine came to their souls, and through the quickening of His Spirit their lives were brought to God; let them recall how the clouds of their alienation were wafted away, and there blazed out before the inner eye the glories of that world which eye has not seen; let them think how life was ennobled and glorified as they heard the call, "Arise and lay hold on your heritage as sons of God"; let them again come face to face with the Cross of Jesus Christ and see the channel through which all these came to them—the self-sacrifice of which the Cross was the measure. And let them hear the great question: "All this Christ has done for you—what have you done for Him?" Christianity is self-sacrifice and burden-bearing — have you converted it into self-pleasing and self-indulgence? Can those who owe everything that makes life worth living to Jesus Christ refuse when they hear His voice summoning them to take possession of the world in His name? The motive that the Church must bring home to

the hearts and consciences of men is the motive of personal obligation to Jesus Christ.

And the Church must cease being content to live on the outskirts of Christianity—its members must enter in and possess the land. The savage may own a territory rich in coal and iron and gold, but because he knows not how to sink a shaft, and is too indolent to toil, he lives on the surface, naked and squalid and miserable. Christianity is the communication to men of the spiritual power of God; but Christians refuse to sink the shaft—and they are but poor, ineffective, naked degenerates, while the gold is under their feet. If they only knew the meaning of the words: "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from Me ye can do nothing," then there would be in the Church a mighty, irresistible power which would sweep over every frontier, and possess every land in the name of Jesus Christ. They would realise that all the power of God was working through them, that all the forces of the universe were working for them, that the stars in their courses were fighting on their side, and that against the Church of God, glowing with His omnipotent

Spirit, nothing could stand. It was in the power of the ever present Lord, in the might of the Holy Spirit, that in the early days Christianity won its triumphs. There is no other way, and no other power, through which Christianity will win triumphs to-day.

The conquering power will manifest itself when Christians again realise their personal obligation to Jesus Christ. A Christendom in which the followers of Christ are dead to the stirring of personal obligation, in which the mass of Christians view with indifferent eyes the enterprise of missions, in which only a small fraction of the Christian host take any thought of what the glory of Christ demands—such a Christendom will never win the world for Christ. If only Christians would *believe* in Christ; would realise in the experience of their own souls and their own lives who Christ is, and what Christ can do, and what Christ demands—then the frontiers would disappear, and all lands be occupied in His name. But a nominal Christianity, which does not really believe in Christ, which does not see in Him the Saviour of their own souls and of the whole world, which is not therefore

ashamed to say, when the universal command sounds in their ears, "I don't believe in Missions"—such a Christianity will not win an islet, far less a world. The man who does not believe in missions is a man who does not really believe in Christ. And the work to which the Church is urgently called is to make the faith of Christ again live in the hearts and souls of men. Then will the power come which will win the world for Jesus Christ. Then will that spiritual power which once swept Westward, anon sweep Eastward, until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

"THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE"—
THE CALL TO UNION

The primal condition laid down by Christ—The citadel within which unity is realised—The belief in the Incarnation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—Difficulties in way of corporate union—Influence of Missions on the unity of the Church—Necessity for an international Board of Missions—Christianity being saved on the mission-field.

X

"THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE"—THE CALL TO UNION

THE work of evangelising the world is so great that it can only be effectually grappled by the united forces of Christendom. What Christendom needs is to have the parochial outlook replaced by the world-wide look. This is the benefit which the enterprise of missions confers on the Church. When Christians see the vast task that is to be accomplished, then they will see things in the right proportion. At present Christians conduct a campaign against heathenism, but it is a campaign in which its forces are disunited, in which there is not one concerted plan of action, which is not animated by one spirit, and which too often subordinates the thought of the triumph of Christianity to the thought of the

triumph of a denomination. What would be thought of a country which sent forth to the field to wage a war against a powerful enemy, an army which was not under the direction and subject to the orders of one commander, in which the infantry was independent of the cavalry, and the artillery independent of both? Only ignominious failure could await such an army. Yet the forces of Christendom going forth to conquer the world for Christ are an army "in which there is no room for generalship." The proof of the power of Christianity is that under those conditions it has been conquering. The folly of man is not able, however great the folly may be, to prevent the conquering might of Christianity.

In no circumstance is there such a call sounding in the ear of Christendom as the call which comes from the mission-fields summoning the Churches to close their ranks. But the call comes from an infinitely higher source. It comes from the Lord Jesus Christ. On that night on which He robed Himself for the great sacrifice, and when He had already in Spirit poured out His life that the world might be

saved, He prayed for His own, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." The yearning palpitating in the heart of Christ in the supreme hour was the yearning that His followers might be one in the love of God, and one in the love one of another. This was the boon He craved of the Father; it was on the fulfilment of this that it depended whether the world would believe. Century after century, generation after generation, the great prayer of the Lord's intercession has sounded in the ears of men; and from the most excellent glory whither the Lord is for us entered, the ear of faith can still hear the words of that prayer, ringing as the cry of Love alone can ring, thrilling with passionate yearning, seeking this one thing—that all who name His name may be one. And yet, with that cry in their ears ringing from the upper chamber, wafted from the central glory, the followers of Christ pay it no heed. Though the Lord, in prayer to His Father (in words the intensity of whose solemnity lies in the fact that they are addressed to God and not to man) makes it known that

the bringing of the world to His faith depends on the unity of His disciples, yet there is no matter too trifling, but because of it those who call themselves by His name, rend the Church, which is His body, and stand apart from each other refusing to fulfil the very condition on which alone the world can be won for Christ. They appeal to their principles and are deaf to the voice of Christ; they root themselves in ancient controversies and steel themselves against the love of Christ. Lacking the love of Christ, they know not the unity which is in Christ. For love is unity; love cannot be isolated from love; love seeing any barrier separating from those beloved cannot rest until the barriers be removed. Love throws dividing walls to the ground, that heart may speak to heart and love may grow. But Christians stand apart, waging a campaign in which there is no concerted, united action, because the love of Christ is lukewarm in their hearts, because they know not what it is to surrender the heart to the love of God—the atmosphere in which alone all who believe are one. And there is presented to the world this most pitiful and humbling spectacle Christian

Churches with the one hand making efforts (feeble efforts, it is true, for how could it be otherwise?) to send the gospel to the heathen, and with the other hand throwing insuperable barriers in the path of the gospel. For the Lord declared that the gospel would conquer when His disciples were one—and they refuse to be one. If ever there came to the Churches the call to self-examination and humiliation it rings in their ears to-day from those fields where Christianity is grappling with heathenism, and where Christianity languishes because Christians refuse to listen to the voice of Christ, refuse to obey the command of Christ, and refuse to fulfil the condition on which the world can be won for Christ. At one and the same time Christendom proffers heathenism the bread of life and the poison of sectarianism! "You urge me," says one, "to become a Christian. Which of the numberless forms of Christians shall I accept? I shall always be a Christ-man, but never a Christian." Such is the bewildered feeling of heathendom in face of our rent and divided Christianity.

Is there, then, a remedy for this pitiable condition which saps the energy and blunts the

weapons of Christianity? Is there a citadel within which the divergent forces of Christianity can concentrate, and out of which the conquering power can go forth—the conquering power of unity. If the divergence between Christians be in matters so great that because of them they can never bring together into one army their present woefully divided and scattered forces, then we must sorrowfully acquiesce in the present condition of division and sectarian isolation, and abandon for ever the hope of winning the world for God and His Christ. But, thank God, we are not shut up to the acceptance of that conclusion; we are not forced because of it to abandon our ideal and our dream—not our ideal, but the ideal of the Lord Jesus Christ. For if we examine what is vital and operative in the Christian Churches we will find that beneath all their divergencies they are really one. And their condition of separation is not due to the eternal and unchangeable principles which lie at the root of Christianity, but is wholly due to minor matters of detail, to questions of organisation and procedure—things which are of little import and would not in themselves save the soul of even a titmouse.

It is not because of great principles that Christians stand apart; it is because of passions which have no root in Christianity, but which have their roots in fallen human nature.

If we look at the Christian Church we shall find that beneath all changes and difference there are some things regarding which Christians in all ages were at one. Though it be true that there have come changes in the conceptions of Christianity which have amounted almost to a revolution, and though in our own time we have witnessed such changes as, in the words of the late Professor James, "make the thought of a past generation seem as foreign to its successor as if it were the expression of a different race of men," yet there have been two great truths at the heart of Christianity which are unchanged and unchangeable. The one is the coming of God to men in the mystery of the Incarnation, and the other the rendering up of the lives of men to God through the indwelling and the operation of the Holy Ghost. It is these two truths, and all that flows from them, which form the citadel within which all Christians are one. The Lord Jesus Christ

has stood for nineteen centuries before the eyes of men, and as they gazed on Him, and listened to His words, there has ever come to their hearts such an overwhelming impression of His moral loveliness, of His perfect love, of His transcendent ideal, that slowly, and at times reluctantly, the lips of each succeeding generation have joined in the adoring words, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father." Christ is so great, so high above humanity, that there is no way of accounting for Him but this—"God was in Christ." From that flows the gospel of reconciliation, and the gospel of regeneration. And from that also flows the great truth of the operation of God in human hearts through the Holy Ghost. The waters of life are not borne in clouds above our heads, while our lips are parched and we perish; but they condense and flow down into the waste places, coming even to our lips, flowing into our inmost lives, renewing heart and soul into the image of God. That is the everlasting, the unchangeable gospel. Every Church holds these great truths. They are the mainspring of all

Christian activity, the motive power of all progress. The matters regarding which Christians differ are microscopic; the truths regarding which they are at one are the truths which fill heaven and earth with splendour—which make humanity glow with the life which is divine. Beneath the surface Christianity is really one.

What Christendom must do, then, if it is to impress on the whole world the life and the power of Jesus Christ, is to fall back on those great facts which are alone of vital import to Christianity. All whose lips have been constrained to say to Jesus, "Thou art the Son of God"—these are united in the bonds of one faith, one baptism, one hope of their calling. The differences between them in regard to other matters are nothing compared to the difference which separates them from heathenism and from the unbelieving world. It is this essential unity which Christendom is called upon to make visible and operative so that the world beholding it may at last believe. What Christianity is called to do is not to plant in the midst of heathenism a number of various and isolated denominations,

but to plant "one Church under the sole control of the Lord Jesus Christ, governed by the Word of the living God, and led by His guiding Spirit." And the foundation on which that one Church has been built in all ages is one—the truth of the Incarnation; and against the Church built on that rock "the gates of hell shall not prevail." It is to the building of the Church on that one Rock that Christianity is called. That is its essential unity.

There are in the present stage of the Church's development various difficulties which are seen by many standing in the way of a visible embodiment in one united Church of this great underlying unity. They fear that such a union would only be a union on the basis of the "least common denominator," and they prefer to think of a union based not on "compromises for the sake of peace, but comprehension for the sake of truth."

Besides these great common truths, there are other things which many Christians deem vital, and they fear lest, through union with Churches which do not lay the same emphasis on them, they might be relegated to the plane of comparative indifference. But these fears

and difficulties are based on a singular misapprehension. For surely the ideal of a united Church, which the eyes of the devout see in the future, is not a Church impoverished but a Church enriched. What men dream of is a Church which will gather into itself all the treasures of orderliness, of reverence, of devotion, of self-sacrifice, at present existing in the separate Churches, and which having ascertained the element of truth in conflicting systems, will embrace them in a richer and higher unity. Surely a way can be found for reconciling those differences with the great unity which exists. It is not a Church of complete uniformity in ritual and organisation that the future will evolve, but a Church which, reposing on its essential unity, will embrace the largest diversity and afford the fullest freedom in non-essentials. But as yet the Churches are far from the realisation of this ideal. They exhort each other to penitence and prayer—"to penitence because we have all in various ways, as bodies and as individuals, contributed to produce and perpetuate differences; and to prayer because what we all alike need is that God should open our minds

and hearts to receive, without prejudice, the gradual revelation of His will as to the ways by which we are to be drawn together." But penitence that does not forsake the sins professedly repented of is mockery; and prayer for unity, without striving after it, is worse than unreal. Meanwhile a perishing world believes not because of the schisms that devastate the Church and the divisions which dissipate its energy.

This is the great reflex influence which the missionary enterprise is to wield on the Churches at home. From the circumference, from the far-flung battle-line, there comes the call which will compel Christendom to close its ranks in fear of a common enemy. If corporate union be yet far off, if as yet we have only caught echoes of the music that is far ahead, still in the mission-fields the way is being rapidly prepared for the coming day. There the differences between Churches become obliterated in the comradeship of a common warfare. Already some advance has been made towards allotting geographical spheres to different missions. Fifty years ago Bishop Selwyn in the Pacific Islands set a noble

example in this respect. He drew up a scheme by which the different islands were assigned to different societies. "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between my herdmen and thy herdmen," concluded the Bishop, and strife has been avoided up to the present day. But it has, alas! not been so everywhere. Where Christian missions have been at work, there frequently other missions have pressed in, though hundreds of millions of souls are elsewhere without the knowledge of God. If to-day the missionary activities of the Churches were re-arranged and re-distributed, if overlapping were prevented and all collision between various missions made impossible, it would mean that the effective power of Christianity in the mission-fields would be doubled even though not even one additional missionary were provided.

One great step towards the effective realisation of that underlying unity which exists at the heart of Christendom would be the establishment of an International Board of Missions which would allot the different mission spheres, allocate the unoccupied lands among the Churches, and so distribute the forces of Chris-

tianity that no section of the world would be left without the witness of Jesus Christ within it. Such a Board would doubtless recommend the withdrawal of some agencies from particular districts and their removal to other districts. The need of this is most pressing in China, where the missionary societies concentrated their work in the five treaty ports which were alone open to them from 1841 to 1862. In these ports there are now a disproportionate number of missions, and the call is urgent for a re-distribution of the missionary forces as part of a comprehensive plan for occupying the whole world. Questions of property would doubtless arise. But all such questions would be easy of adjustment when the Churches in the West realised that property in the mission-field is not held for their benefit but for the benefit of the native Church. If their withdrawal meant greater progress of the Church elsewhere, it would not mean any loss whatever to the Church of Christ. For the property would only pass from Church to Church for the greater glory of God. An International Board such as this would supply the element of generalship to the great campaign which

Christianity carries on against heathenism, and would be a demonstration of the unity of spirit underlying the diversities of Christian Churches. Such a Board could divide the unoccupied regions among the Churches and societies allocating to each a district proportionate to its resources, laying it as a duty upon their hearts and consciences that they effectively occupy it for the glory of Jesus Christ. No Church, with the spirit of Christ within it, could in honour refuse the call. Only thus can all the world be brought within the hearing of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the mission-fields there is already a great measure of co-operation between the Churches. And union and co-operation once begun will not stop there. There is a great field for the united efforts of the Churches—in the establishing of Christian colleges and universities, in the training of missionaries, in the developing of the spirit of comity and loyalty one to another. Every successful combined effort of the Churches is a step towards that day when Christians shall be one. The mission-field has rung the knell of the policy of isolation. God has so created the world that nothing in that world

will grow and prosper in a condition of isolation. Separate a man from his fellows and he atrophies. Separate a Church from Christendom and its isolation is not splendid—it is pathetic. It spells death. This is the knowledge into which the Churches slowly are growing. They are groping their way towards the inner citadel of union. Bitterness is already dead. And if there be those who still desire to continue nursing an ancient wrath to keep it warm, and so would justify their separation from their fellow Christians, there are two voices summoning them to arise and save themselves by losing themselves in the common life of Christendom. The one voice is the voice of the living Lord—and that voice, if they are to be loyal, they dare not gainsay; and the other voice is the voice that comes wafted in from the mission-fields pleading with the Churches to gird themselves to the greatest work God ever committed to men, to cease their contendings about things of little import, to close their ranks and advance in one solid army on the territories of darkness and of death. A work so great, so transcending human effort, can only be done by a united Christendom.

When the spirit of missionary enthusiasm shall break through the Churches, and the eyes shall see the greatness of the work, and the labour languishing because the labourers are not animated by one spirit and one purpose, then will there rise at home what already has arisen abroad, the passionate cry for the unity of the Church, for the fulfilment of the condition on which alone the world will believe. It is thus on the mission-fields that the future of Christianity is being evolved, that Christianity is being saved.

THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY

The open doors—The opened ways—The opened hearts of the nations — The working of God — The plastic condition of non-Christian nations—Lost opportunities in Africa—Will the opportunity be lost now?—Will the West deprive the East of its ancient faiths without giving a higher?—Christianity's great opportunity to develop itself in the West—"Now let me burn out for God."

XI

THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY

WE have seen how stupendous this work is which remains for the Church to do for the glory of Christ. As the illimitable fields rise before the inner eye, there come to the lips the words, "Lord, who is sufficient for these things?" It remains only to show how in the good Providence of God there has never in the history of the world been a time of so great opportunity as that in which we live. It was in a world which had been prepared for it that Christianity appeared and spread and conquered until the Mediterranean became a sea in the midst of a Christian world; and to-day there comes the fulness of another long period of preparation, when the Pacific and the Indian Oceans and the South Seas are destined, as its fruit, to become girt by nought but Christian countries.

Not so long ago the world was full of closed lands, at whose doors Christianity knocked in vain. In the middle of the sixteenth century Xavier died in a transport of longing to enter the great closed land of China. At the end of the eighteenth century Carey could only gain access to India by voyaging hither in a Dutch ship — England, that country of the Bible, denying him a passage. In the beginning of the nineteenth century Henry Martyn heard the call of God summoning him to India, but missionaries were not allowed by the East India Company to enter India — it was still a closed land. But they sent chaplains! And as a chaplain Henry Martyn gained entrance to India—a missionary in the guise of a chaplain! Only a hundred years ago, but already it all sounds to us as we read—that hostility of a Christian nation to the propagation of the religion it professed, that national denial of the claim of Jesus Christ to be King of kings and Lord of lords—as if we were reading of the acts and policy of some strange, outlandish savage tribe. To-day that condition of things is well-nigh unthinkable. Africa is no longer an unknown and dark world. Livingstone has

led the way though its morasses and fever-swamps opening up the path for the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in his own words, "the end of the geographical feat" has been "the beginning of the Christian enterprise." All over the world every land is open, and the small sections of it which may be still closed to the missionaries are only closed because Christianity has not yet vigorously knocked at the door.

And the doors are not only now wide open, but they are moreover brought within our easy reach. The world has grown small. A hundred years ago the Hebrides were as far from Edinburgh as the heart of Africa is from it to-day. The Somali is our neighbour now in the geographical sense in which the dweller in the Isle of Skye was a neighbour to London two generations ago. The world instead of being filled by races severed from each other by seas and impassable mountain barriers, has been reduced to a unity in which we can say of no race that it is not our neighbour. The African is at our doors; the Chinaman is but a few days' journey away. We can send him a message in the morning

and he will receive it before breakfast. In all this is the hand of God. The Roman laid his roads and drew them straight over hill and plain; his purpose was that his legions might sweep over them and demolish any foe that might dispute his sway; but the purpose of God was that over these roads the messengers of the Cross might run with the great tidings of salvation. And in the fulness of time along the Roman roads there swept to the utmost corners of that ancient world the vivifying message, and hearts risen from the dead took up the ancient refrain, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." And the purpose of God abideth ever the same. When the steamship made its first voyage, when the first engine ran on the rails, when the first message was flashed beneath the waves—men thought only of commerce, of imperial power, of the enrichment of life. But these things God purposed as the means through which the gospel of His Son should hasten to the ends of the earth. And to-day they bring the formerly closed lands to our doors. Along these the message of God runs thrilling to

the uttermost ends of the earth. As it was with the Roman roads, so is it to-day with the inventions of men. They are potent instruments for the evangelisation of the world, polished shafts in the Christian armoury. What was impossible for the generations before us, they make not only possible but easy. In the universe which God made, the seeing eye can still discern the hand of God shaping and moulding and directing its forces to the end that what is highest may put forth its power and rule. It is when the material becomes the instrument of the ideal that it fulfils the thought and purpose of God. The missionary enterprise is the ideal in the hearts of men, the element which is all unselfishness, marred by no self-interest, and the forces of the world are directed by God to this end—the triumph of the Ideal.

What a wonder it all is: the closed doors flung wide open; the way to the open doors made ready and all-prepared—and all within one hundred years! We are so accustomed to tracing out and demonstrating the working and the Providence of God a thousand or two thousand years ago, that we are blind to

the working of the hand of God all round about us in our own day. Yet so it is. And not only has all this preparation been made—preparation which cannot in a world ruled by God fail of its high purpose—but in those countries to which the open doors now give wide access, there the hearts of the nations have been opened for the coming of the great evangel of love. When we were prepared to bring the *true* evangel, then was the way prepared for our going and the door opened for our receiving. In the days that are past we were not prepared to bear the true evangel. We had the treasure but we did not comprehend its true power and its true glory. We thought the gospel of Jesus Christ was a matter of words and doctrines and legal systems. We are only now realising that it is the communication of the love of God to the hearts of men; that Christianity is a spiritual power and impulse stirring all that is great and noble in the soul, making not only righteousness a dream but making it a dream realised in hearts transformed into the image of God. Christianity is indigenous in every land and among every race because Christianity is the love of God

outflowing to men—and that primal feeling of love every race knows. But it is only in this last generation that we have realised it. In times of strife Christianity was thought of as a system which put iron in the blood. When we pierced down to the heart of Christianity, felt its throb again, realised that it was the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit — then the way opened out for the sending of the gospel to the heathen world, and the nations are moved at its approach as if they, too, were prepared for its coming.

The non-Christian world to-day presents an opportunity to the Christian Church such as never before. For the nations of the East are waking out of the sleep of ages. A ferment seems to have taken possession of the ancient races. No longer with their faces towards the glories of a dead past, they have turned towards the future with their hearts vibrating with the spirit of the modern world. China has been transformed, and its whole social life has been revolutionised. To-day it is in the midst of flux and change, and therefore to-day it is plastic in the hands of the Christian moulders

—if they be forthcoming. But if in the time of its seeking there be not the guide to the truth, who knows what half-truth it may accept, and accepting, solidify again into its ancient conservatism? In these years there lies the great opportunity of Christianity in China. If in its transitional state, plastic with the ferment of stirring and conflicting desires, Christianity be unable to make an impression on it, then the day of opportunity will be past. It is the same in Japan, in Persia, in Korea, in Turkey. The next ten years will show whether in the making of the new great powers in the East Christianity will have the predominant influence. When these nations develop their latent energies and organise their forces, much of the destinies of the world will be in their hands. If the tide set not towards Christianity now, it will presently set against it. Therefore the call is urgent to the Church to enter in and possess these lands. If it is to be ever, it must be now.

Whether we will or not, out of the contact with the West the ancient faiths of the East crumble. The coming of Western science means the deserting of the ancient shrines. Shall we

give the East our material advantages, our science, and our knowledge of Nature without the great moral principles and religious aspirations and motives which control these forces in the West? In India secular education is the national system; China and Japan are establishing similar systems. Shall the result of the West coming to the East be the development of nations of secularists, freed from the ancient religious and social restraints, with no higher restraints replacing them, left "without discipline, without contentment, and without God"? Then, surely if that be the result of the impact of the West on the East, the East will have cause to curse the West. Lest that dire result should accrue, Christianity must bring its power fully to bear now. If the power of Science is in the East to have the restraints of Christian morality, the Churches must act now.

In India the out-caste races are eager to receive Christianity. While Christianity is tarrying, Hinduism and Islam are gathering in the pariahs—profiting by their unrest. There are mass movements towards Christianity; but teachers and evangelists are not forthcoming. These others have no lack of reapers in the

harvest-fields; is it the case that Christ will continue to call in vain? Of old a multitude no man can number passed through fire for His sake, meeting death joyously, deeming life well lost if they could but win His smile! Is the power dead—the love, the devotion, the passionate adoration? Will Mohammed find multitudes responding to his call, and Christ call in vain?

It is a dread responsibility to suffer the day of opportunity to pass. In a measure we have suffered it to pass in Africa. The pagan tribes were there ready to welcome any deliverer from the spiritual terrors in which they lived. The emissaries of Islam came, and Africa is now being steeled against the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Races which might have grown into the measure of the stature of Christ have solidified into Pharisaism. The day of opportunity was let slip. Will it be the same in China, in India, in the near East? If these are to be saved from the fate of Africa, Christianity must act now.

For Christianity's own sake, in these lands of the West the Churches must put forth their full power now. The power of the Churches

in the West is being sapped by luxury and self-indulgence and the love of this present world. To be saved the Churches need the bracing of a great struggle—the putting forth of their energies in the doing of a great work. Wars have ceased, great causes no longer stir men, and humanity needs some moral equivalent for the sacrifices and heroism of war. Here is that great moral equivalent. Here is a field for self-sacrifice, for heroism, for conflict. Here is a masterful mission for strong men. Through the Churches will pass the stirring of a new breath of life, when they will hear the voice of the Lord calling them to go forth at once and leave no land without the witness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, no citadel of ancient evil without attack; and all that is noble and heroic will rise up and brace itself for world-wide conquest. If this work were easy it would make no appeal; it is because it is difficult, to human eyes impossible, that its call comes compellingly to the strong. Only through it shall Christianity save itself. When the blood ceases to circulate to the extremities of the body death is near—"the missionary activities of the Church are the circulation of its blood."

There never has been a day of opportunity like this in the history of the Church and the world. The way is open; the door is open; the hearts of the nations are open. Will the Churches rise to the great call which summons them? Will they, failing to obey Christ, and failing to communicate Him, themselves lose Him? Is the element of the heroic still vigorous in Christianity? Does Christ still stir the hearts of His people so that they are willing to die for Him?

"A people is upon thee loving death as thou lovest life" was the message of the Mohammedan of old to his enemy. Is there still in Christendom the spirit which loves death for Christ's sake? If there be, then in this, the great day of opportunity, the tide of the world's destiny will be turned towards the Lord Jesus Christ. And it will be turned. For the Spirit is still in the midst of the Church, and until the end adoring lips will cry—

"Now let me burn out for God."

IT SHALL BE WON—*NIL DESPERANDUM CHRISTO DUCE*

Mood of pessimism—Mood of optimism—The three great forces: Unity, Prayer, Consecration—The day of triumph breaking over all lands.

XII

IT SHALL BE WON—*NIL DESPERANDUM CHRISTO DUCE*

THESE pages will have been written in vain unless the reader has realised the overwhelming magnitude of this great work of winning the world for Jesus Christ, and the hopelessness of it unless Christendom bestirs itself and puts forth the fulness of its power in these present days. There are times when the eager spirit, seeing the goal so far remote, and the barriers so insuperable to human vision barring the way, suffers itself to be clouded by the mood of despair. It is hard to go on tugging at the dull, mechanic oar when for all the tugging the port seems never any nearer. But there are other times when there comes to the soul the overmastering impression that this work

is not doomed to failure, and that the day of victory is rapidly approaching. And that was the impression which stamped itself indelibly on those who felt the rising tide of spiritual power which swept through the World Missionary Conference. That Conference marked a great stage in the onward march of Christianity to conquer the world; it marked also the changed spirit which animates Christianity. There have been other conferences — great Œcumenical Councils—in the past. But these were not like this. In these, doctrines were debated, often in anger, and dogmas were tossed to and fro amid scenes of incredible bitterness. But in this Conference it was not theories which were debated; nothing found a place but the great practical question of how the world was to be won for the Christian ideal. And as meeting succeeded meeting the impression grew that behind this work there was the power of the living and omnipotent God, and that it must prevail. Again and again the words of the greatest of missionaries rose to the lips: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

There were three things which brought this

feeling of Christianity's conquering power and impressed it indelibly on the soul. And they were these: the power of unity, the power of prayer, and the power of the consecrated spirit.

1. Unity. We have seen how Christ laid it down as the primal condition of winning the world that His followers should be united in one, and we have seen also how the work has been sore let and hindered because this condition has not been fulfilled by the Church. In the outward sense of visible embodiment there is no unity. But in the inward sense, all who love the Lord, have found peace with God, have felt in their hearts the renewing Spirit—all before whose inner eye, behind the seen and temporal, there has blazed forth the Unseen, the realm eternal, the city without foundations, and the King immortal and invisible in the midst of it—through that high experience have been made one, and continue to be one so long as they abide in that high experience. Separated by the flimsy network of words, they are one in God. And in the measure in which they are at one with God they are at one with each other. Nothing can

ever alter the fact that the hearts, by whatever name they may be called, which have felt the one love of God possessing them are, in virtue of that, one in that experience which alone is great. And this feeling of oneness became so great that the soul realised not only its unity with those visible and present, but its unity also with those still absent. They, having not yet come to a perfect knowledge of their brethren were absent; but though absent, the feeling grew that they too, so far as the love of God possessed them, were one with their brethren. The souls that meet in Christ—at the last nought can sever them one from another.

One of the scenes which will live for ever in the memory and be an inspiration in the life was that when his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury stood up to address twelve hundred delegates from every mission-field, every Church, every society of the reformed faith. In every word he spoke he was one with them, and they were one with him and one with each other. As the great and noble words flowed on, depicting the work of missions as the central work of the Christian Church,

that great mass, in name so divergent, were welded into one by the inspiration of one noble ideal, by the call of one great work. "Be quite sure," concluded the Archbishop, "that the place of missions in the life of the Church must be the central place and none other. Secure for that thought the first place in our plans, our policy, our prayers, and then —the issue is His and not ours. But it may well be that, if that came true, there be some standing here to-night who shall not taste of death till they see here on earth the kingdom of God come with power." They had come hither from every corner of the earth, men of every race and colour, from every clime, and, hearing, there came to them the power which comes to those who feel that they are part of a great, united host, advancing in the power of one inspiration to conquer. And at last they stood with bowed heads while the Archbishop prayed, and their voices rose as the waves of the sea swelling on the shore, as with his they blended their voices, saying "Our Father"; and over a gathering of men and women such as no Archbishop ever before him blessed, he pronounced the benediction.

And they went forth into the now well-nigh silent city with one thought in their hearts, that now the world was to be won—because behind the great campaign there was the power of a united Church. For that was the dominating impression, that beneath all outward differences, all who name the name of Christ are one in heart and spirit—one in a common enthusiasm for the cause and for the glory of Jesus Christ, the one and only Lord. When the realisation which came to a great assembly that night shall come to all the Church and to all the world, the day of victory will be near. There are verily those to-day on earth who shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God come with power.

2. Prayer. Unto the Church God has committed this great function—the wielding of the spiritual forces throughout the world through the ministry of prayer. It is wonderful to think how it has been committed to Christians to unloose the spiritual power of God. Far in the West, aspirations and prayers go forth into the Infinite, and these fall in reviving showers of spiritual influence on the

parched mission-fields of the East. And though that omnipotent force has been committed to the Church, yet Christians neglect it, so that the dew falls not in the East because it is not generated in the West. One of the great facts which came home to the heart at the World Missionary Conference was the central power and paramount importance of prayer. No words can express the solemnity which fell on the crowded assembly, when every day silence wrapped it—silence broken now and then by a voice vibrating in a cry to God. One such hour stands forth pre-eminently. When the great Conference was hushed in silence, and through the silence the spirit felt the present Lord touching it, possessing it, then suddenly, through the stillness, there broke the voice of the Lord. Across nineteen centuries it came, from the central glory it sounded, and hearing that voice the soul bowed low before its Lord. And the words were these: "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that

they may be one . . . that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me . . . that they may be made perfect in one . . ." Again and again the voice of the reader, quivering with emotion, broke the silence, and again and again the solemn refrain, "That they may be one . . . that the world may believe," came piercing as a sword to the heart. And now in silence, and now in audible broken words, the great assembly confessed the sins of the Church—the pride, the arrogance, the self-glory, the earthly passions, which broke its unity and made it impossible for the world to believe. Time and distance are blotted out; the Lord and His Church are again face to face; He summons His own to look at Him and His desire for them, and to look at themselves and at what they have done. And from a bowed multitude there rises the silent cry of awe, "Lord be merciful to us who are sinners." A great multitude heard again the yearning cry of their Lord, "That they may be one," and there came to them a passionate yearning for the day when they can realise it in its fulness, and when its power will be manifested. It was an hour in which the

silence was filled with God; an hour in which the soul realised the power of prayer to cleanse, to save, to restore the ideal which passions had dimmed, and to vivify the whole energies by bringing them again into unison with the will of Christ. That hour of prayer made bitterness and strife for ever impossible to those who shared it. It brought home the great fact that only through prayer can the Church abide in the clear consciousness of the will of Christ, and only through prayer wield the power of the evangel. It was on a little band of men praying together that the Spirit descended of old, establishing the Church, and it is to-day through a praying Church that the Spirit will work for the conquest of the world. The work languisheth; the Church is feeble—because the Church does not pray.

3. Consecration. God can only work by instruments fully surrendered to His will and attuned to His purpose. That there may be such instruments for working the will of God, there must be on the part of Christians the full surrender of the life to God. Only the man in whom and through whom God works can do the work of God. And when the heart

is defiled, and the purpose divided, and the mind not single; when the spirit enthrones self, saying, "My will be done," and the heart enthrones self, saying, "My pleasure be done," then it is manifest that through such a man, the will of God cannot work. There must be an absolute surrender of the whole man to God ere any great work can be done for God. The reed is a poor, feeble instrument, but the music of the spheres can breathe through it—then the reed is glorious. But a reed stopped by earth, choked by mud, will be for ever silent and for ever inglorious. It is only when the Spirit of God fills the heart, animates the purpose, strengthens the will, cleanses the vision, that the music of heaven can become audible through any man. To this end the heart must be surrendered; the bowed soul must say in the garden, "Not my will but Thine be done."

This was the last great impression which came, when Mr. J. R. Mott summoned in the name of God the last and greatest of all the meetings of the Conference to consecrate themselves to an unfinished work—the work of winning the world. "It is a dangerous thing," said he, "to grow into a knowledge of the

needs of men, to be swept by generous emotion, if that knowledge and that emotion does not issue in genuine action." The great Conference had come to a knowledge of the world's need as never before; it had been swept by great and generous emotions—now they had to act. But to act effectively, they must consecrate themselves fully to God, separating themselves for ever from all flabbiness and all selfishness.

Then came the great moment of a great Conference. Sudden silence filled the hall, and in the silence, in the very presence of God, a great multitude consecrated themselves anew to the unfinished work. All of a sudden the Unseen became the only reality for a great assembly. "That night," wrote Ebenezer Erskin of an hour of great experience, "that night I got my head out of time into eternity." It was verily so that night also for a great throng. The city of God and the palaces thereof glowed and gleamed—and they are never afar. And from subdued souls the silent cry arose, "Not my will but Thine be done."

Yes, the world will be won for Christ. The passion which can throb so in the soul cannot

be hindered. The cause which has the power of God thus manifestly behind it cannot fail. The day of triumph is breaking over all the world. Let him who reads join in the prayer that truth and righteousness may everywhere prevail:—

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who through Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, hast revealed to us the riches of Thy love, and hast raised us up out of the dust to the glorious heritage of sons of God and heirs of eternal life, help us now so that we may surrender ourselves to Thy will. Sanctify us by Thy Holy Spirit, so that when the voice of our Lord calls us, He may not call in vain. Suffer us not to be rebellious or to quench Thy Holy Spirit, but surrendering ourselves to our high calling, may we give to a perishing world what Thou gavest to our perishing souls. Thy fields, O Lord, are ripe unto the harvest, and in our hearts Thy voice calleth, and with penitent souls, in the strength of Thy Holy Spirit, we dedicate ourselves to Thy service. And to Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, shall be the glory, world without end. AMEN.

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